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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

CARTER G. WOODSON: SCIENTIFIC HISTORIAN
OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY
AND EDUCATION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP & POLICY STUDIES DEPARTMENT
HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

BY

ALVIN L. WILLIAMS

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 1994

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(pioneer inventor of the personal computer) is in order. Without the use of the personal computer, this task would have taken many more months to complete.

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To my spiritual and loving parents
Felicia and Alvin J.
and our parents before them

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INTRODUCTION

Born to ex-slaves, Anne Eliza Riddle and Henry James Woodson, Carter G. Woodson, appears to have been fortunate to receive the parents that he did. Although they had experienced a calamitous life as menials, they were able to establish a supportive family unit. The love Carter received from both of his parents enabled him to become fortified with confidence and self-esteem, which would help prepare him for the arduous tasks ahead.

Especially from his mother, he seemed to get special attention as she nurtured him and praised his good efforts; of the seven children, he was considered her favorite.¹ His father, also, gave him some sound principles which seemed to provide a guidepost throughout his life. In his own words, he proclaimed his father as being the greatest factor in his education.

This former slave, an illiterate man, taught me that you do not have to wait until you die to think about losing your soul. He insisted that when you learn to accept insult, to compromise on principle, to mislead your fellow man, or to betray your people, you have lost your soul. You are already damned.

He taught his children to be polite to everybody, but to insist always on recognition as human beings; and if

¹Sister Mary Anthony Scally, Walking Proud: The Story of Dr. Carter G. Woodson. (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, 1983), 30; Sis. Scally was a member of the Sisters of Mercy, Baltimore Province and a retired librarian. She produced probably the most extensive bibliography on Woodson.

necessary fight to the limit for it.²

These principles seem to have been ingrained in him, and, as we will see, helped fashion his character.

As a young lad Carter roamed the hills of New Canton, Buckingham County, Virginia, in his bare feet, and he would often relax in the aura of the beautiful Virginia country side.³ It is probably then that he formed visions of his aspirations and destinies. It is also probably then that he became determined to play a significant role as an educator, as an historian, and as a philanthropist. Though he was impoverished in substance, he recollected:

Often I [Carter] remember that I had only one garment and had to go to bed early on Saturday night that my mother might wash this and iron it over night. In this way only would I have something clean to wear to Sunday school. Often during the winter and early in the spring we did not have sufficient food, and we would leave the table hungry to go to the woods to pluck the persimmons which the birds had pierced with their beaks and left on the trees. Sometimes in the fields we had to eat sour grass that grew early in the spring out of the providence of God.⁴

Yet he was rich in sustenance.

Perhaps, the lack of opportunity to attend formal schooling, enabled him to escape the development of low self-esteem and low self worth; as he would later expound upon in

²Carter G. Woodson, "And the Negro Loses His Soul," "Observations," Chicago Defender, 25 June 1912.

³Scally, Walking Proud, The Story of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, 7.

⁴Woodson, "And the Negro Loses His Soul."

his Mis-Education of the Negro.⁵ Herein, Dr. Woodson would proclaim that the calamitous plight of the Negro is due to the Negro's mis-education; and has resulted in adverse affects not only educationally, but socially, economically, politically, and psychologically. Having to read to his father and other elders began to shape him as a scholar, for he read a wide range of topics.⁶ And his desire, discipline, and determination, seemed to provide avenues for his accelerated progress once he had the opportunity to advance himself, i.e., to attend school and receive formal degrees. The quest for degrees would not be easy for Woodson, because it would entail a tremendous amount of effort (trying to earn a living and attend school.) These endeavors were met with many disruptions, especially in his earlier years. However, Dr. Woodson made it quite evident that he had an insatiable desire to receive formal schooling, because once he had the opportunity to attend, he advanced in far less time than others have done.⁷

⁵Claude M. Steele, "Race and the Schooling of Black Americans," The Atlantic Monthly, April 1992, 68; Steele is a social psychologist.

⁶Carter G. Woodson, "My Recollections of Veterans of the Civil War," Negro History Bulletin (February, 1944): 103-4, 115-18.

⁷Samuel L. Banks, Carter Godwin Woodson: Educational Endeavors Before College, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--Secondary to University Level, no. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1-2; Banks is past President of the ASALH, and Supervising Director of the Office of Social Studies, Baltimore Public Schools.

Dr. Woodson's major efforts involved his tireless strivings to bring African-Americans to an appreciative level of respectability. In his opinion, a plethora of Americans had been mis-educated to many historical truths, and that the lack of these truths had exacerbated the view of African-Americans as worthless noncontributors to any significant historical occurrences. Based on Dr. Woodson's willingness to aid European-Americans and others in their research, and to argue against the institution of segregation, this writer also views him as a philanthropist. Not only was he concerned about African-Americans, but he had sincere concern for others, as well. (A case in point, is the eight persons honored in the month of January 1938, in the Negro History Bulletin, which he produced, seven were European-Americans.)⁸ His fervent desire to set the record straight in regard to the exclusion of African-Americans from American history, may make him seem biased; however, it appeared that Dr. Woodson disliked the severe treatment which the downtrodden and indentured experienced, and the injustices they endured. He was especially concerned about what had been done to the mind of the Negro as can be seen in the following:

Only one Negro out of every ten thousand is interested in the effort to set forth what his race has thought and felt and attempted and accomplished that it

⁸Patricia Watkins Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography." (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Ohio State Univ., 1971), 211; Romero was employed at the ASNLH headquarters for three years as a research associate editor of the Negro History Bulletin from 1965-1968.

may not become a negligible factor in the thought of the world. By tradition and education, however, the large majority of Negroes have become interested in history and status of other races, they spend millions annually to promote such knowledge. Along with this sum, of course, should be considered the large amount paid for devices in trying not to be Negroes.

The chief reason why so many give such little attention to background of the Negro is the belief that this study is unimportant.⁹

However, he expressed:

The Negro can be proud of his past only by approaching it scientifically himself and giving his own story to the world. What others have written about the Negro during that last three centuries has been mainly for the purpose of bringing him where he is today and holding him there.¹⁰

And so he was compelled to set the record straight, in order to approach some sense of egalitarianism, especially, in America. Furthermore, to lend credence to his overall concern for truth, the following quote is revealing:

. . . hold on to the real facts of history as they are, but complete such knowledge by studying also the history of races and nations which have been purposely ignored We should not study less the achievements of Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome; but we should give equally as much attention to the internal African kingdoms, the Songhay empire, and Ethiopia, which through Egypt decidedly influenced the civilization of the Mediterranean world. . . . we would not learn less of George Washington, "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of his Countrymen"; but we should learn something of the three thousand Negro soldiers of the American Revolution who helped to make this "Father

⁹Bonnie J. Gillespie (a male), Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as A Teacher and Administrator, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 6 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1989), 2; Gillespie is a former Executive director of the ASNLH, and he also taught at Howard Univ. and West Virginia State College.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 2.

of Our Country" possible.¹¹

Dr. Woodson traveled to many other countries, including Africa, Asia, many parts of Europe, and the Philippines, and became fluent in French and Spanish. He clearly had his own mind concerning the direction he would take in life, and the manner in which he would hurdle many encountered obstacles and frustrations.

He could be considered a self-made man.¹² He was proud and was easily distinguished in the way he carried himself; his upright posture and usually stern appearance set him apart from others.¹³ He also was a man who did not mince his words; he spoke his mind and "called a spade a spade," but yet he was a compassionate man who had stellar love, especially, towards children. When it was time to produce in the office, Dr. Woodson required diligence on the part of the workers, as he did himself. On some occasions he was a "big

¹¹Roland C. McConnell, "Carter G. Woodson's Accomplishments," Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 2 (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, 1989), 6; McConnell is Professor Emeritus in History, Morgan State Univ., Baltimore. He was Secretary of the Associated Publishers, Inc., and a member of the Executive Council of the ASALH.

¹²Joe Johnson, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Father of the Study of Black History," The Crisis, February 1987, 36.

¹³Willie M. Miles, Associated Publishers, Inc.. Interview by author, 27 April 1992, at Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Miles is the oldest surviving member of the Associated Publishers, Inc..

tease," and he had a great sense of humor although he was known to be somewhat cantankerous at times.¹⁴ However, he was, socially, very kind toward the ladies.¹⁵

Dr. Woodson was very much against the idea and practice of segregation. He viewed this institution as the major means of subjecting African-Americans to immense degradation. To this effect he wrote:

I have seen Negroes thus miseducated champion the cause of segregation in church and state. This sort of training, however, has never registered on me. . . .

The progress of this evil has been one fatal step after another. We accepted segregation in the schools to get jobs. Then we accepted it in the civil service because we had to make a living. Next we had segregation in the cities. Following this came segregation in rural areas. This has finally led to the proposal to have the races on different continents; but since the white man has taken over Africa, someone will have to discover a new continent for the Negro or exterminate him altogether. . . .¹⁶

Throughout most of his life, Carter was a devout church-goer. He was a strong believer in the principles of "Protestant Ethic" affirmed by Max Weber, the German sociologist. These principles postulated that hard work, sobriety, education, drive and ambition would result in

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Mary Dougherty, Washington, D.C., former secretary at the ASNLH under Dr. Woodson. Interview by author, 30 January 1992, Evanston, Il. Telephoned, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Dougherty is a former secretary of Woodson.

¹⁶Woodson, "And the Negro Loses His Soul," Chicago Defender, 25 June 1912.

success.¹⁷ In fact, it was not uncommon to hear Carter quote from the Scriptures:

. . . "what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?"

I am just beginning to understand what this means. When I was a boy seeking religion in Virginia, my white and Colored spiritual advisors left me under the impression that the soul is a piece of flesh, and if you do not have it saved it will be fried to a crisp or burnt to ashes in the lake of fire and brimstone.¹⁸

Clearly, Carter was very much influenced by his religious experience, even to the point of contemplating the ministry. And as a young man, he preached several times in the First Baptist Church in Huntington, West Virginia.¹⁹

In order to convince all Americans of the worthiness of African-Americans through their many significant contributions, Dr. Woodson presented well-documented evidence to this effect. To provide media through which to disseminate these "truths", he established the , Association for the Study of Negro Life and History--ASNLH in 1915 (now the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History--ASALH), the Journal of Negro History (1916), the Associated Publishers, Inc. (1920), the annual Negro History Week Celebration-1926 (now a month-long observance, an

¹⁷Banks, Carter G. Woodson: Educational Endeavors Before College, 1.

¹⁸Woodson, "And the Negro Loses His Soul."

¹⁹Patricia Watkins Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography." (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1971), 28-30.

Extension Division (for home study, and correspondence courses)-1927, and the Negro History Bulletin (1937).²⁰ Initially, these institutions were financed during the 1920s, mainly from principal sources, such as, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund, Leonard Outhwaite, the Phelps-Stokes Fund, and the General Education Board. During the 1930s and 1940s the funding mainly came from African-American communities around the country.²¹

In order to inspire and educate the children, who were most dear to him, he wrote and published textbooks for elementary--junior high, senior high, and college students. Respectively, some were Negro Makers of History (1928), The Story of the Negro Retold (1935), and Negro in Our History (1922). The History of the Negro Church was also used in many colleges and universities as a textbook in courses on the study of the African-American church.²² And the African Background Outlined (1936), was also used by high schools and

²⁰Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 8.

²¹Jacqueline Anne Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History" (Ph.D., diss., University of Rochester, 1983), 240-278.

²²Jeanette L. Cascone, Carter G. Woodson: Exemplar Afro-American History and Thought, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--Secondary to University Level, no. 7 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1; Cascone is past President of the ANALH and retired Professor of History, Seaton Hall Univ..

colleges to assist educators.²³

Dr. Woodson authored twenty-two books that are listed as follows:

1. Education of the Negro Prior to 1861: A History of the Education of Colored People of the United States from the Beginning of Slavery to the Civil War (1915)
2. A Century of Negro Migration (1918)
3. The History of the Negro Church (1921)
4. Fifty Years of Negro Citizenship as Qualified by United States Supreme Court (1921)
5. Early Negro Education in West Virginia (1921)
6. The Negro In Our History (1922)
7. Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830 (1924)
8. Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States in 1830 (1926)
9. Negro Orators and Their Orations (1926)
10. Ten Years of Collecting and Publishing the Record of the Negro (1926)
11. The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1800-1860 (1926)
12. Negro Makers of History (1928)
13. African Myths, Together with Proverbs: A Supplementary Reader Composed of Folk Tales from Various Parts of Africa for Children (1928)
14. The Negro as a Businessman (joint author with John Harmon and Arnett Lindsay)-1929
15. The Negro Wage Earner (with Lorenzo J. Greene)-1930
16. The Rural Negro (1930)

²³Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 216-217.

17. The Mis-Education of the Negro (1933)
18. The Negro Professional Man and the Community with Special Emphasis on the Physician and the Lawyer (1934)
19. The Story of the Negro Retold (1935)
20. The African Background Outlined (1936)
21. African Heroes and Heroines (1939)
22. The Work of Francis J. Grimke (1939).²⁴

Throughout most of Dr. Woodson's educational career, he did not have courses in African-American History. However, being aware that this represented a tremendous void in American History, he began to embrace this problem enthusiastically. This man with a vision has professed:

If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated. In centuries to come when scholars after forgetting the prejudices of this age will begin to make researches for the whole truth, they will have only one side of the question if the Negro does not leave something to tell his own story.

History shows that one race has accomplished about as much good as any other in fulfilling its destiny. All peoples have contributed to the making of our civilization. We should emphasize not Negro History but the Negro in History. What we need is not history of selected races or nations, but the history of the world void of national bias, race hate and religious prejudice. Thorough instruction in the equality of races can bring about a reign of brotherhood through an appreciation of the virtues of all races, creeds and colors. In such a millennium the achievements if the Negro properly set forth will crown him as a factor in early progress and a maker of modern civilization.²⁵

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Nerissa Long Milton, "Historian and Scholar . . . Carter G. Woodson," Introductory Pamphlet, The Father of Black History - Carter G. Woodson, A Living Legacy, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 1

And so this former coal miner, student, educator, administrator, traveler, linguist, editor, publisher, businessman, historian and scholar, underwent a type of evolution which made him awesomely rugged for the task.

Mary McLeod Bethune succinctly summed up Carter G. Woodson as follows: "With the power of cumulative fact he moved back the barriers and broadened our vision of the world, and the world's vision of us."²⁶

This researcher has traveled to Tulane University's Amistad Library in New Orleans, Louisiana. There the Julius Rosenwald Fund Archives and the Charles Spurgeon Johnson Papers were perused, both of which contained letters written by Dr. Woodson. This researcher attended and documented (in the form of notes, photographs and video recording) the Carter G. Woodson Exhibit at the Library of Congress which was held in April, 1992, in the Madison building. While in Washington, D.C., some of the Moorland Spingarn Research Archives at Howard University (which contained letters of correspondence between Dr. Woodson and his sister Bessie) were used to extract pertinent information. Also, while in Washington, this researcher had the most auspicious occasion to interview

(Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 18.

²⁶An exhibit held at the Library of Congress, Madison Building, February 6, 1992 through April 26, 1992, titled "Moving Back Barriers: The Legacy of Carter G. Woodson"; This designation appears to have come from Bethune's statement.

Ms. Willie M. Miles (oldest living staff member and project coordinator for the Associated Publishers, Inc.) at the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, for about five hours. Through her a plethora of information on Woodson in the form of books and Carter G. Woodson Kits for elementary and secondary students, as well as, her recollections, were invaluable.

In hope that an opportunity would arise to peruse church documents at Shiloh Baptist Church, which Woodson attended, this writer attended Sunday service. Unfortunately, however, what little they had was burned in a fire a few months prior. Mrs. Marion J. Pryde (one of Woodson's cousins) was in attendance that day and was able to give additional information on securing material at the Association.

This writer spent many hours at the Carter G. Woodson Regional Library, in Chicago, Illinois. There microfilms of the entire collection of manuscripts in the Carter G. Woodson Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents deposited at the Library of Congress by Woodson himself were examined. And documents located at the University of Chicago's Regenstein Library were also found to be extremely helpful. All of The Journal of Negro History and The Negro History Bulletin were located at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and were vital to this work. Important pieces of information were obtained from the Newberry Library in Chicago and the library at Alabama A & M

in Huntsville, Alabama.

Loyola's Libraries, at the Lake Shore and Water Tower campuses in Chicago, proved very useful. Through these libraries much needed material from other universities were obtained through interlibrary loans. And they also had a large number of books that Woodson authored.

Personal interviews conducted by this researcher actually began with one of Dr. Woodson's great-nieces, Beatrice Luther (Evanston, Il), who has facial features strikingly similar to his. And by telephone, this writer interviewed Marion J. Pryde (prior to the D.C. visit,) a former secretary, Mary Dougherty, and Dr. Dorothy Porter-Wesley, a former associate and historian.

This researcher has encountered many discrepancies concerning Dr. Woodson's birth order in his immediate family. This is probably due in part to the fact that he left no known autobiography. And no sources encountered, shed any light on the circumstances surrounding his illness in the Philippines, or his death. Nevertheless, this researcher is of the opinion that Dr. Carter G. Woodson was ahead of his time, and considering what he contributed to the world, he can be likened to the great composer Beethoven. Rightfully so, he has been called the "father of the scientific study of Negro history."

The use of terms, such as, Negro, blacks, colored, and African-Americans all refer to the people of obvious

African descent. The terms European-American, Caucasian, and white, all refer to persons who are not so obviously associated with African descent; usually, many began in Europe when tracing their ancestry. However, owing to the "great brotherhood of man" all humans have a common origin;²⁷ and this idea, in spite of the concentration of his efforts, is consistent with the overall philosophical understanding of Woodson. The names Carter G., and Woodson both refer to Carter G. Woodson.

This researcher has made an earnest effort to seek and examine information, such as, written books, reports, diary, records, video, letters, dissertations, interviews, along with letters (from Woodson to his sister Bessie, for example), and photographs (in Woodson's Library of Congress collection), in order to gain insight. To the extent feasibly possible, external and internal criticism has been employed to determine reliability and accuracy of meaning in the material gathered.

²⁷Allan C. Wilson and Rebecca L. Cann, "The Recent African Genesis of Humans," Scientific American, April 1992, 66-73.

CHAPTER I
BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF DR. "G"²⁸

Before one can begin to discuss the greatness of a historical figure, of any sort, one must pay homage to origins of greatness. And this greatness involves, especially, that historical figure, without whom not one person would exist; that being the human female, a mother. It is clearly and widely understood, that upon entering this world one must be nurtured and cared for; and it is this vital function, primarily exercised by the mother, that begins the conditioning that will help determine the outcome of the individual.²⁹ So it was with Carter G. Woodson, who was conceived by Anne Eliza Riddle, several years following her union with James Henry Woodson, in 1867.³⁰ Even at the age of eleven, Anne Eliza, demonstrated the conviction and greatness of her heart. In an attempt to ward off the sale of

²⁸This is the affectionate title one of Woodson's great-nieces used to address him. She was also the first person interviewed by this researcher.

²⁹Henry Gleitman, Psychology, "The Biological Basis of Love: The Parent-Child Bond. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1981), 434-439.

³⁰Miles M. Fischer, IV. "Parents of Carter G. Woodson," Life and Times of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Kibwe Bey and Co., at the ASNLH. Associated Publishers, Inc., 1990, videocassette.

her mother, Susan Hudgins Riddle, and the separation of her mother from her siblings, Anne Eliza pleaded with "the master" to sell her instead. Not able to get a satisfying price for Anne Eliza, "the master" sold Susan and two small children for \$2300 to pay off some of his debts.³¹ Hence, acting out the divine greatness of mothers, Anne Eliza gave birth to Carter on 19 December 1875.³² It was around the holiday season, in the rolling hills of New Canton, Buckingham County, Virginia; and according to Rayford W. Logan, it was one of the poorest counties in Virginia.³³

The Early Years

The year 1875 was also the year that Booker T. Washington graduated from Hampton Institute, embarking upon his career. However, on a less brighter side, Dr. Samuel L. Banks gave a description of the milieu Carter G. was born into; he wrote:

. . . the world into which Woodson was born in 1875 was harsh, racist, and in many instances, as depicted in

³¹Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 4.

³²Kelly Miller, "An Estimate of Carter G. Woodson and His Work in Connection with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc.," Brief Biographies of Carter G. Woodson, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 17 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1; Miller was an educator at Howard Univ. in D.C.; and Samuel L. Banks, Carter Godwin Woodson: Educational Endeavors Before College, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1.

³³Ibid.

widespread lynchings in the South, vitriolic and bestial toward Black citizens . . . Reconstruction was coming to an ignominious end; Black citizens were systematically denied the right to vote and other civil rights; public schooling for Black children, especially in the South, was grossly underfunded or almost non-existent in rural areas; and the restoration of the practice of "white supremacy" and control.³⁴

The Woodsons were able to escape these conditions without much incidence. Despite their impoverished condition, Anne Eliza and James Henry struggled to provide a strong family foundation for their children. It is very possible that the closeness of the Woodsons to Anne Eliza's brothers, the Riddles and the Barnettes ("educated men") helped in their survival during these years.

Carter G. was the seventh child and fourth son born to Anne Eliza and James Henry. Of the seven children, three were daughters and four were sons. Cora was the oldest daughter and the oldest of all the children. Next came the sons Robert, William, then James. After Carter came Susie and then Bessie.³⁵ Two of the children, their names not mentioned, died of whooping cough, sometime before Carter was born.³⁶ All and all, Anne Eliza gave birth to nine children

³⁴Banks, Carter G. Woodson: Educational Endeavors Before College, 1.

³⁵Minnie Shumate Woodson and Marion J. Pryde, The Woodson Family Tree, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 21 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 4; Sis. M. A. Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 4.

³⁶Scally, Walking Proud: The Story of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, 8.

and she and James were very loving to their children.³⁷

The Adolescent Years

Carter, along with his brothers, helped their father manage his ten-acre tobacco farm. As a result of this, he was not able to attend the five-month district school. By the time he was nine years old, he had attended school just a few times in his life.³⁸ Carter was large for his age and he seemed to function as a typical country boy; he would roam the slopes barefoot, fish from the James River, catch insects, and relax by enjoying the serenity of the countryside.³⁹

One day Carter G. was paging through an old Bible, or ancient reader. To his surprise he discovered that he could identify all the letters of many of the words. Beaming with excitement, he found ten words that made sense to him; he was reading now.⁴⁰ Soon his father, James, provided him with old newspapers and Carter read to him everyday because James could not read. Before long Carter was reading all sorts of literature.

³⁷Scally, "Carter G. Woodson: Childhood to Adult," Life and Times of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Kibwe Bey and Co., at the ASNLH. Associated Publishers, Inc., 1990 videocassette.

³⁸Ibid., 7.

³⁹Ibid., 6-9.

⁴⁰Charles R. Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator and Prophet--Views on Education, 1875-50, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 8 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1; Long was President and Chief Executive Officer, Long and Associates, Educational Consultant.

Eventually, Carter attended school, usually when there was not much to do on the farm, or on rainy days. During this time he attended a rural school taught by his two uncles, John Morton Riddle and James Buchanan Riddle. When he was not able to attend he would study on his own. His father continued to have him read everyday and at times Carter would even take time out to help his sisters, Bessie and Susie, study.

As time passed, it became increasingly difficult for James Henry to support the family. The farm was not producing like it once did, and so eventually, William, Cora, Robert and James left home to find employment. In 1892, at the age of sixteen, Carter G. left home trekking 210 miles over the mountains. He went looking for work with his older brother Robert, and closest friend. For a few months they worked for the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad from Thurmond, in Fayette County, up Loup Creek.⁴¹ However, the appeal of earning higher wages drew them to Nuttallburg, Fayette County (near Huntington), to work in the coal mines of the Appalachian Mountains. Their brother, William, whom had left to work in the mines before Robert and Carter, developed asthma from the coal dust and soon had to discontinue.⁴² At some point, William and Robert became engaged in a violent dispute which

⁴¹Scally, Walking Proud: The Story of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, 19.

⁴²Ibid., 21.

resulted in William leaving West Virginia; he then traveled to Pittsburgh and never had anything to do with his family again. Robert was said to have been very domineering.⁴³

Carter and Robert, already broad-shouldered and muscular from working on the farm, became even more so as a result of the sixteen to eighteen-hour day of mining. These exertions developed an even more robust physique in them.⁴⁴

Probably some of Carter's most memorable days as a teenager were those he spent with Oliver Jones. Oliver Jones was a miner and friend, and an old Civil War veteran. After work, Oliver would open up a tearoom in his home for decent miners to relax.⁴⁵ He was not able to read, but he had an interesting background of knowledge and a collection of books dealing with the achievements of African-Americans. This collection included: Men of Mark, by W. J. Simmons, Black Phalanx, by T. J. Wilson, and Negro Troops in the War of the Rebellion, by G. W. Williams. Having access to these books expanded Carter's knowledge of achievements by African-Americans.

Soon a deal was agreed upon between Carter and

⁴³Ibid.; Considering Robert's domineering behavior and the discrepancy of the birth order of the Woodson children, from seemingly different reliable sources, this writer finds reason to believe that William was younger than Robert. Besides, Carter G. at one point wrote: "My oldest brother Robert H. Woodson, had gone in this migration"

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 22.

Oliver. In order to have any of the nice things to eat in the shop, Carter had to read from subscriptions of African-American newspapers like The Mountaineer and The Pioneer (edited in West Virginia by Christopher Payne): The Richmond Planet (edited by John Mitchell at Richmond); and other newspapers like the Pittsburgh Telegraph, the Toledo Blade, the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette, the Enquirer, and the Louisville Courier Journal.⁴⁶ He also read about such outstanding editors as Murat Halsted, John R. McClean, and Henry Waterson. And, occasionally, he got inklings of Samuel Bowles of the Springfield Republican, of Charles A. Dana of the New York Sun, and of Whitelaw Reid of the New York Tribune.⁴⁷ Having to read from such a wide range of sources reporting events throughout the area, one can begin to surmise the scholarly development in Carter G., and the knowledge he gained. One can also begin to appreciate the primordial conditioning which would help mold him into a historian. Although he was sixty-eight when the following quote was published, he recalled some inner emotions:

In this circle the history of the race was discussed frequently, and my interest in penetrating the past of my people was deepened and intensified.

This circle, however, was not narrowly confined to the discussion of the trials and afflictions of the race. Oliver Jones was a liberal-minded man seeking to broaden his vision by keeping up with whatever passed in this country and in remote parts of the universe.

⁴⁶Woodson, "My Recollections of Veterans of the Civil War," 116.

⁴⁷Ibid.

. . . In these newspapers which I read to Oliver Jones were speeches, lectures and essays dealing with civil service reform, reduction of taxes, tariff for protection, tariff for revenue only and free trade. We had the opportunity to learn through the press about the gold standard, bimetallism, the demonetization of silver, and the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the legal ration of 16 to 1. Along with these came the new leaders of the Populist doctrines with such thoughts as those of "Sockless" Jere Simpson of Kansas, Tom Watson of Georgia, and William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska in the wave of primary elections, the recall of judges, initiative and referendum, and the curbing of monopolies by government ownership. In seeking through the press information on these questions for Oliver Jones and his friends I was learning in an effective way most important phases of history and economics.⁴⁸

It is interesting to note that Woodson met hundreds of Civil War Veterans.⁴⁹ One of these veterans with whom he was most impressed was George T. Prosser. Prosser had built a successful African Methodist Episcopal Church in Huntington, West Virginia, and Woodson praised Prosser for delivering one of the most impressive sermons on his experiences in the Civil War, to which Woodson had ever listened.⁵⁰

Adult Years

In 1895, after having worked in the mines for three years, Carter resigned from this venture and enrolled in the

⁴⁸Ibid., 116.

⁴⁹This writer recalls a recent motion picture called "Glory." The movie was mainly centered around an African-American regiment known as the Massachusetts 54th. Regiment under the command of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. One of the Civil War veterans Woodson got to know was George T. Prosser, who served under Shaw (Shaw was one of the main characters in the movie.)

⁵⁰Woodson, "My Recollections of Veterans of the Civil War," 117.

Frederick Douglas High School in Huntington. It was the only high school for African-Americans which had recently opened in town. It is not difficult to imagine that it must have been somewhat awkward for Carter G. to enter high school when he was almost twenty.⁵¹ Once again Woodson found himself under the tutelage of a family member. This time it was his uncle Carter Harrison Barnett, a graduate of Dennison University in Ohio.⁵² Also during this time, he was instructed by William T. McKinney, said to have inspired him to higher things.⁵³ Nevertheless, he persevered and graduated, only one and a half years after enrolling, in 1896; he was twenty then.⁵⁴ Considering his vast reading experiences, it is not difficult to understand why he was able to graduate from high school in such a short period of time; he also was allowed to skip a few grades because of his accelerated performance.⁵⁵

Having a fervent desire to further his academic career, Woodson enrolled at Berea College in Kentucky, in

⁵¹He was more than likely the oldest student in the class.

⁵²Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 22.

⁵³Miller, "An Estimate of Carter G. Woodson and His Work Connected with The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc.," 1.

⁵⁴Copy of Diploma from Douglass High School Huntington, West Virginia, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989.)

⁵⁵It is noteworthy to point out that in the year Carter graduated, this nation witnessed the epochal decision of Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896 which retarded desegregation public education.

1896.⁵⁶ This was a school founded by the abolitionist John G. Fee, prior to the Civil War, and it served as a center for abolition in Kentucky, as well as, an educational center for the children of the abolitionists. Berea became a college in 1868, however, it retained its function as a preparatory academy, serving the poor southern whites and freedmen. It was heavily funded by the Freedman's Bureau, following the Civil War.⁵⁷ Later a few young African-American children, whose families found refuge on Fee's estate, attended the school.⁵⁸ Woodson was, especially, interested in this college due to its interracial education.⁵⁹ When Woodson entered, he was placed in a lower division which was equivalent to the junior year in high school; this was considered the Freshman Literary class.⁶⁰ He earned a

⁵⁶Rayford W. Logan, "Carter G. Woodson: Mirror and Molder of His Time, 1875-1950," Journal of Negro History, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 16 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 26; Logan was a graduate student at Harvard in 1932 and was one of Woodson's assistants.

⁵⁷Romero, Carter G. Woodson: A Biography, 23; Freedman's Bureau was established 1865 by the federal government to assist newly freed blacks.

⁵⁸Gossie Harold Hudson, Labors at the Capstone of American Education: Berea College, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania University, The Sorbonne, Harvard University, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 1; Hudson was Professor of History, Morgan State Univ., Baltimore.

"advanced academic credit" through tests conducted by his professors, and was in residence only two-thirds of the first year. His courses the first year concentrated mainly on the Greek classics, but he also had a little bit of sociology and economics.⁶¹

Between September and December of 1897, Carter attended Lincoln University in Oxford, Pennsylvania; this was one of the early African-American colleges during the slavery era; it was founded by John Miller Dickey originally as the Ashmun Institute.⁶² Woodson probably made the switch due to the receipt of a scholarship. However, the atmosphere of this college environment was not very suitable for him so he left at Christmas.⁶³ Perhaps, also, he was seeking a more comprehensive curriculum, in terms of the inclusion of African-American participation and achievements in American history.

In 1901, Woodson again enrolled in Berea, during the summer, and was registered as a junior in the college, i.e., the Junior Literary class; and he continued to be tested in the interim. He also took courses in residence at the

⁶¹Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 24.

⁶²Hudson, Labors at the Capstone of American Education: Berea College, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania University, The Sorbonne, Harvard University, 1.

⁶³Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 6; Perhaps, he was also seeking a more comprehensive curriculum, in terms of the inclusion of African-American participation and achievements in American history.

University of Chicago in the summer of 1902, and, subsequently, transferred four college credits back to Berea. The courses were Educational Psychology, Rural Communities, Plato, and Trigonometry.⁶⁴ In 1903, Woodson met all of the requirements for graduation, and, thereby received a Bachelor of Literature degree (a two-year degree);⁶⁵ he was now twenty-seven.

Perhaps, in order to earn money to further finance his education, Woodson returned to Fayette County, West Virginia where he became employed as a teacher. From 1898 to 1900, Woodson taught in the small town of Winona, although he did not receive his teaching certificate until 18 May 1901 (for Huntington); he was the only teacher and even functioned as the "engineer" and custodian.⁶⁶ From Winona he was called to a principalship at his old alma mater, Frederick Douglass High School, and was there from 1900-1903.⁶⁷ It was probably very moving for Woodson to return to the high school he graduated from only four years earlier--especially, to have the opportunity to sign the diploma of his baby sister Bessie, who graduated in 1901. It is interesting to note that

⁶⁴Ibid., 25.

⁶⁵Hudson, Labors at the Capstone of American Education: Berea College, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania University, the Sorbonne, Harvard University, 1.

⁶⁶Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator and Prophet--Views on Education, 1875-1950, 2.

⁶⁷Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 4.

although Woodson was principal of Douglass High School, he had not yet received his two-year degree in higher education which, afore-mentioned, was from Berea. Even more interesting, however, is the fact that his mother still exercised much control over him --a fact which has led some writers to conclude that she was over-protective. The following quote may lend some credence to this belief:

. . . Although I was a man of twenty-five and the principal of the local high school, my mother would order me to take my father a warm breakfast on Sunday morning that he might feast just as we did on the steaks, chops and fowl we usually had on Sunday morning.⁶⁸

Yet Woodson found this duty beneficial in furthering his education of African-Americans in the Civil War; he continued:

I was glad of the opportunity, for I soon found myself learning so much about the Civil War from the actual participants that I sought rather than neglected the opportunity to carry the dinner pail.⁶⁹

Woodson continued his pursuit of excellence, again enrolling at the University of Chicago in the autumn of 1903.

Possibly seeking a way to earn more money to finance his education as well as to broaden his experiences, Woodson sought employment with the War Department which would involve an assignment in the Philippines. Twelve hundred dollars a year was quite different than sixty-five dollars for teaching in Huntington (which also included administrative expenses). On 20 November 1903, soon after undergoing the required

⁶⁸Woodson, "My Recollections of Veterans of the Civil War," 117.

⁶⁹Ibid.

examination (in which he discovered that he was color-blind), Woodson boarded the S.S. Korea bound for Hong Kong. After a one or two day lay over, he boarded another steamer bound for Manila; and the entire trip lasted one month.⁷⁰ Shortly, after his arrival, he was assigned to the town of San Isidro in the province of Nueva Ecija, which was located on the island of Luzon.⁷¹

Although he was over five thousand miles away from Chicago, he continued his academic pursuits at the University of Chicago by taking correspondence courses during the summer of 1905. (He would, eventually, take a total of fifteen correspondence courses through the years, and accumulate credits for a double major in History and Romance Languages).⁷² Incidentally, his first serious study of history in higher education came under Professor Edwin Earle Sparks, who taught him American History. He also studied under Thomas A. Jenkins (in the Department of Romance Languages and Literature), who is believed to have supervised some of his correspondence courses.⁷³ Woodson remained in the Philippines from 1903-1907, during which time he taught and became supervisor of teachers. For some unknown reasons he became very frail from poor health, and was forced to resign his commission 5 February 1907; he had recently signed up for

⁷⁰Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 36.

⁷¹Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 7.

⁷²Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 59.

⁷³Ibid.

resign his commission 5 February 1907; he had recently signed up for another two years in December for the province of Pangasinan.⁷⁴ Leaving the Philippines Woodson traveled westward in order that he might visit Asia and Africa. He wrote:

While in the St. Settlements and India I made a special study of their school systems. Not a little of my time was spent in Palestine, Egypt, Greece and Italy. I was in Europe about six months. For one semester I was a special student of European history in the University of Paris (La Sorbonne).⁷⁵

While at the Sorbonne, Woodson studied under Professors Aulard, Diehl, Lemonnier, and Bouche'-Leclere.⁷⁶ And as a result of his stay in Paris, he added French to his linguistic repertoire, along with the Spanish he had already learned while in the Philippines. He would also continue taking correspondence courses (English, Tacitus, Cicero, French, Modern Dramas and Lyrics of Advanced French Reading) at the University of Chicago, as he visited other countries.

Before continuing on to Chicago, Woodson stopped in Huntington where he was greeted as a celebrity. Having departed by way of the Pacific Ocean and returning via the Atlantic, he had been around the world. He was even encouraged to speak at the Baptist Church about his visit to

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Miller, An Estimate of Carter G. Woodson and His Work in Connection with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1.

Palestine.⁷⁷ Soon he returned to the University of Chicago in October 1907 to continue his studies. On 17 March 1908 Woodson received his A.B. (Artium Baccalaureus--Bachelor of Arts) degree, and on 28 August 1908 his A.M. (Artium Magister--Master of Arts) degree.⁷⁸ Whatever driving force was motivating Woodson, it continued to do so, for he then set his site on Harvard, probably because it was recognized as having the best history department. Also, they utilized a scientific approach in researching historical events and figures.

The year 1908-1909 found Woodson in residence at Harvard University engaging in graduate work in history and political science. Under Professor Ephraim Emerton he studied History 5 (The Church in the Middle Ages from Charlemagne to Dante--Formation of the European States, The Holy Roman Empire/The Roman Papal System as the controlling force in European Life.) Under Professor Charles Gross he enrolled in History 9 (The Constitutional History of England to the Sixteenth Century.) Under Assistant Professor Roger B. Merriman he took History 31 (Selected Topics from the History of Continental Europe in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries--International Politics from 1494 to 1659.) Under the eminent Professor Edward Channing he studied History 23a (Selected Topics in the Historical Development of American

⁷⁷Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 7.

⁷⁸Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 1; Alumni Directory, University of Chicago, 1861-1910.

Institutions --The Opposition to England, 1760-1775), History 23b (Selected Topics in the Historical Development of American Institutions --The Formation of the Constitution, 1775-1789); and History 23c (The Literature of American History.) He also studied Government 6 (History of Political Theories) under Professor William Munro.⁷⁹ One does not have to think long to realize that Woodson was clearly becoming a scholar in history, a seeker of truth, a learned man, having been trained at the most prestigious institution of higher learning in this country. With remarkable tenacity he pursued his goals. One can't help but think that Woodson was intent on achieving specific goals, and was not going to let any hindrances deter him from carrying out his visions.

One particular experience at Harvard, seemed to have a tremendous impact on him; this was a challenge presented by Professor Edward Channing. An account of this occurrence is presented by the historian, Dr. Lorenzo Greene:

While attending a class taught by the famous historian and author, the late Professor Edward Channing, he[Woodson] listen in amazement as the eminent Professor told the class that the Negro had no history. Woodson said that he resented the statement and replied that no people lacked a history. Channing, according to Woodson, then suggested that he investigate and seek to validate his assumption.⁸⁰

Having already traveled widely, perused documents in various

⁷⁹Logan, Carter G. Woodson: Mirror and Molder of His Time, 1875-1950, 28.

⁸⁰Alfred Young, "The Educational Philosophies of Booker T. Washington and Carter G. Woodson: A Liberating Praxis." (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1977), 108.

archives in Asia and Africa, and studied collections at Oliver Jones, Woodson probably found it rather easy to gather documents to support his refutation. It is almost inconceivable that a Professor of Channings caliber could have seriously made such a statement. This could very well have been a significant turning point in Woodson's life, to the effect that he, even more than ever, saw the need to correct the historical inaccuracies and voids in regards to African-Americans. This being the case, African-Americans would, thereby, command more respect in regard to their significance in world history.

Having need to peruse documents at the Library of Congress as he worked on his dissertation, "The Disruption of Virginia," Woodson took up residence with a family named Murdock; they were located at 1924 11th. Street in Washington, D.C..⁸¹ He sought employment in the Washington school system and was assigned to the prestigious M Street School (later renamed Paul Laurence Dunbar in 1916),⁸² where he taught French and Spanish. This school was the center of learning for African-Americans anticipating higher educational pursuits. It was a school for the elite which prepared more African-American students for the best New England colleges

⁸¹Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator and Prophet--Views on Education, 1875-1950, 2.

⁸²Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 4.

than any other high school.⁸³ Woodson taught school during the day and researched at night, and on the weekends. Completing all the required examinations, research, reading, and writing, Woodson received his Ph.D. from Harvard University June 1912. He was the second African-American (Dubois was the first) to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard. Interestingly, his "provocative professor," Edward Channing chaired his reading committee, along with two other giants in American historiography, Albert Bushnell Hart and Frederick Jackson Turner.⁸⁴

Considering all the experiences Woodson had lived through up to this time, probably one of his most demeaning incidences occurred while in Washington--report of which appeared in The Crisis magazine:

The Harvard men [sic] of Washington, D.C., recently asked Mr. C. G. Woodson to join their club. He filled out the application and was thereupon visited by the president of the club who explained that his application could not be accepted because he was colored. Mr. Woodson was recently granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Harvard University.⁸⁵

This incident could, very definitely, have provoked moving more swiftly to devising an institution that would bring African-Americans toward a level of more respectability. Woodson, rather obviously, was interested in becoming a part of the Harvard Men of Washington, D.C. organization,

⁸³Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography, 71.

⁸⁴Ibid.; Woodson was the first in the field of history.

⁸⁵The Crisis, 168, February 1915.

otherwise, he would not have submitted the application; he probably considered it an honor. However, to have the president personally visit him, perhaps to see if he really was colored, and then proceed to inform him that his application was denied because he was colored, must have been humiliating.

It was not too long afterwards that Woodson found himself engaged in an organizational meeting. On 9 September 1915, in the Wabash Avenue YMCA in Chicago,⁸⁶ Dr. Woodson suggested the forming an organization that would offset the attacks made by European-Americans on African-Americans. This organization would set forth the truth in regard to American history and the significant part African-Americans played in it.⁸⁷ The suggestion of such an organization was, in part, precipitated from a discussion of racial matters in the "Birth of Nations." In secretary Alexander L. Jackson's YMCA office, Alexander L. Jackson, James E. Stamps, George Cleveland Hall, W. B. Hartgrove and Woodson formed the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH).

Less than a month later in October 1915, ASNLH was incorporated in the District of Columbia. In the following year, January 1916, Woodson founded The Journal of Negro History, a highly acclaimed and scholarly periodical that he

⁸⁶Logan, Carter G. Woodson: Mirror and Molder of His Time, 1875-1950, 34.

⁸⁷Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 92.

edited for thirty-four years.⁸⁸

After about nine years at M Street High School, Dr. Woodson accepted a post as principal of Armstrong Manual Training School, and was there from 1918-1919. In 1919 he accepted a position of Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Howard University.⁸⁹ However, Woodson left in 1920 because of J. Stanley Durkee's contempt for African-Americans.⁹⁰ Shortly thereafter, John W. Davis, President of West Virginia Collegiate Institute (later to become West Virginia State College) invited Woodson to join the faculty as Dean; Woodson served in this capacity from 1920-1922.⁹¹ It is during his employment here that he started the Associated Publishers, Inc., in 1920; this organization served as a source for publishing the works of African-Americans, and a few European-Americans, who could not get materials published elsewhere. Although this organization served as an outlet for many of Woodson's books, he had already published The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861, and A Century of Negro Migration, before

⁸⁸Michael R. Winston, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Prophet of a Black Tradition," The Journal of Negro History, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 16 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989,) 40; Winston was Director of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University in 1975.

⁸⁹Scally, "Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography," 10-11.

⁹⁰Ibid.; Durkee was a former President at Howard.

⁹¹Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 5.

it was established. It is believed that the Associated Publishers, Inc. is the oldest African-American publishing firm in this country.⁹²

According to Patricia Romero, the first Negro History Week had its beginning 7 February 1920.⁹³ It was an outgrowth of a lecture Dr. Woodson gave, as an honorary member, to his fraternity brothers of the Omega Psi Phi organization in Nashville, Tennessee, and it occurred during the summer. In his lecture he urged the fraternity to become more involved in the dissemination of the history and culture of African-Americans. The Omegas reacted favorably and conducted exhibits, forums in schools, churches, and public meeting halls.⁹⁴ This celebration was called Negro History and Literature Week, and continued until 1925 when the Grand Conclave of the fraternity decided to abolish it.

Woodson, realizing the seriousness of this decision decided to engage the ASNLH to promote this cause. In the following year, 1926, a national celebration of Negro History Week was launched.⁹⁵ The fraternity, again having a change of direction, decided to continue its own program to highlight

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 148; February was the month selected because it is the month that Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas celebrated their birthdays.

⁹⁴Ibid., 149.

⁹⁵Ibid.

African-American accomplishments. Out of deference for Woodson, however, they called it National Negro Achievement Week, designed to enhance race pride.⁹⁶ As was characteristic of Woodson's efficiency in executing a project, he contacted schools, churches, and local groups. He put together a brochure and mailed it to ministers, teachers, and others whom he believed would champion the cause, in helping to raise an awareness of the meaningful role of African-Americans in this country. This brochure was about four pages and contained a brief history of the Association, as well as, a curriculum in African-American history. The school curriculum contained a list of books that were to be read in conjunction with the topics presented.

In years to come, Woodson would design Negro History Week Kits containing pictures of outstanding African-Americans, from the past, and of present day. The kits also contained stories about achievers, for children, and further study guides, for adult groups.⁹⁷ Lecturers were often provided, and included such persons as, Charles H. Wesley, Alrutheus A. Taylor, Rayford W. Logan, Lorenzo J. Greene, and Luther P. Jackson; they usually went on the lecture circuit during the second week in February.⁹⁸

At a NAACP meeting held in Chicago on 29 June 1926,

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid., 155.

Dr. Woodson received the Arthur P. Spingarn Award. This was an award established by the NAACP in 1914, comprising a medal and certificate, and given to an outstanding person of immediate African descent, who had contributed significantly in the area of human rights. Prior to receiving the award, Woodson had written about six articles for the Journal of Negro History, read and reviewed over ninety books, and published eleven books, which he either wrote, or compiled.⁹⁹ The citation read: "For ten years' service in collecting and publishing records of the Negro in America. . . ." It is interesting to speculate here that Dr. Woodson may have been the impetus behind the effectiveness of the NAACP in the quest for civil rights for all Americans.

After joining the NAACP, Woodson was not quite pleased with its organizational setup at the Branch in Washington, D.C., so he wrote a letter outlining two proposals that included: 1) the branch secure an office having a center to which persons may report whatever concerns the Negro race and from which the ASNLH may extend its operations into every part of the city; and 2) the ASNLH divide the city into districts in which a canvasser would be appointed to enlist members and obtain subscriptions to Crisis, the NAACP periodical. Even more interesting is the proposal he made on a different occasion in which he suggested boycotting business

⁹⁹Ibid., 158; This researcher counted eleven publications, whereas, Romero reported six.

establishments that did not treat both races alike. He also had the audacity to write that he was not afraid of being sued. In fact, he said that he welcomed a law suit, as it would do the cause some good.¹⁰⁰

As the celebration became widely known, it became an important event in the political arena, specifically, for those representing African-American voters. In the 1930s, the Mayor of New York began issuing proclamations for Negro History Week, soon followed by similar endorsements from the Governor of New York.¹⁰¹ In the 1940s, it became a custom for governors of various states to issue proclamations recognizing the celebration. Although many did carry out this observance in the eastern states, it was not until after the Civil Rights crusade of the 1950s and 1960s that European-Americans showed much interest in the project. Woodson was appreciative when he received a letter from a Jewish organization responsible for establishing Jewish History Week, in 1947. The letter said that his efforts in establishing Negro History Week provided motivation for them to do likewise, towards their cause.¹⁰²

Rayford Logan, held the view that Negro History Week was "the best work of propaganda," that had been done for

¹⁰⁰Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator and Prophet--Views on Education, 3.

¹⁰¹Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 155.

¹⁰²Ibid., 156.

African-Americans. He stated:

. . . literally tens of thousands of people have come to have . . . a higher appreciation of the achievements of the Negro. . . . If Negro History Week has done nothing else, it has removed this inferiority complex from the thinking of large numbers of Negroes and has given many others a sense of pride and optimism.¹⁰³

Woodson's tremendous efforts appear to have had a positive impact on the thoughts and actions of African-Americans, thus, provoking sensitivity to the embracing of factual information relating to their worthiness. Dubois praised Woodson, writing that as his

crowning achievement he established Negro History Week . . . [the Director] literally made this country, which has only the slightest respect for people of color, recognize and celebrate each year . . . the effect the American Negro has upon the life, thought and action in the United States. . . . I know of no one man who in a lifetime has, unaided, built up such a national celebration.¹⁰⁴

Soon the demand for information concerning the accomplishments and achievements of African-Americans increased, thus, making it difficult for the ASNLH to accommodate the numerous requests in a timely manner. Therefore, Dr. Woodson found it necessary, and feasible, to begin an Extension Division in 1927.¹⁰⁵ This facet of

¹⁰³Ibid., 151.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 151-152.

¹⁰⁵Associated Publishers, Inc., Home Study Department of the Extension Division of The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc.--Bulletin of General Information, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 19 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989,) 1.

Woodson's program comprised a Home-Study Department offering correspondence courses in Negro Life and History, as well as, the providing of lecturers.

In order to reach the children at the elementary and secondary levels, Woodson began publishing The Negro History Bulletin, in 1937. This venture was, especially, important to him because, he has often said, "much of what I did concerning Negro history, was for the children."¹⁰⁶

Carter G. has often been accused of running a one-man operation, because he wanted to have control over the direction of the institutions, he started. It is not too difficult to understand, why Dr. Woodson appeared this way. For one, he had probably experienced far more occurrences of societal concerns, of various countries than any other African-American, in his time. Secondly, he probably had a far more well-rounded education than any other African-American in his immediate circle, who was dedicated enough, tenacious enough, and genuinely committed to the cause enough, to overcome the many obstacles in maintaining his operations. His sixteen to eighteen hour days in the coal mines, his conviction towards the uplifting of African-Americans, whom he saw continually being denied the pursuit of the American dream, his own personal disappointments confronting him with demeaning stereotypes in far too many encounters, all brought

¹⁰⁶Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 4.

about the evolution of a mind set destined not to fail, and to proceed with steadfastness.

Realizing his imperfection in temperance, at times, perhaps, allowed Woodson to declare that no woman could stand to share his rigid regimen.¹⁰⁷ Herein, may lie the basis for his not marrying. Besides, the mission that he was undertaking became his life, thereby, not leaving much time to raise a family. He did, however, court several ladies through the years, but the relationships did not last.

Dr. Woodson could be very sociable, and he had a great sense of humor. Sometimes his roar of laughter would fill the room, as he sometimes reared his head back to do so.¹⁰⁸ And with the ladies in the office, he was sometimes a "big tease."¹⁰⁹ Woodson especially enjoyed sitting on the steps of the ASNLH telling stories to the children; he could hold their attention for great lengths of time.¹¹⁰ This is very credible considering the fact that he had been around the world, encountering many interesting experiences as he traveled to Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Philippines. "At times he would meddle, practically, every kid that passed by," Ms. Miles pointed out¹¹¹. Knowing that Dr. Woodson loved to

¹⁰⁷Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 12.

¹⁰⁸Miles, Interview, 27 April 1992.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid.

talk, and could do so for several hours, some persons avoided him at times, especially, if they could not themselves engage in a lengthy conversation.¹¹² A few other peculiar things about Woodson were his usual expressions, such as, "what's the point," "got to have character," and an occasional slap on his head when he forgot to do something.¹¹³ Woodson loved cornbread and buttermilk;¹¹⁴ in fact, he was considered to be a vegetarian,¹¹⁵ at least, in his latter years, and he enjoyed playing tennis. He was a connoisseur of fine wines and restaurants in this country and in Paris.¹¹⁶ He was also very benevolent and did not mind sharing.¹¹⁷

Woodson was very much a family man, to the extent of showing love and concern to members of his immediate family. One of his relatives recalled how at Christmas time, he would arrive with an arm load of gifts.¹¹⁸ Letters sent to his sister Bessie concerning the purchasing of a house in

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Alexander L. Jackson, "Greeting to the Association on its Golden Anniversary," Introductory Pamphlet: The Father of Black History-Carter G. Woodson, A Living Legacy, Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc. 1989,) 14.

¹¹⁶Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson: Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 1.

¹¹⁷Miles, Interview, 27 April 1992.

¹¹⁸Beatrice Luther, "My Childhood Recollections of Uncle "G". Evanston, Il. Interview, November, 1991.

Huntington, Virginia, appear to be most revealing concerning some aspects of Woodson's personality. Woodson was in Washington, D.C. at the time of these correspondences.

Dr. Woodson had been sending Bessie monies to proceed in purchasing a house at 1703 Artisan Avenue, Huntington, West Virginia. In a letter dated 28 March 1941, he greeted her with, "My Dear Sister," and began to explain to her the method of negotiating a purchase price, not to exceed \$2000.¹¹⁹ In another letter dated 19 May 1941, after the house had been purchased, Woodson showed compassion for the tenants presently occupying the residence. He cautioned Bessie that even though the house was now his, they would have to wait because " . . . one can not just place a person on the street with no place to go" ¹²⁰ Bessie seemed to experience some difficulty in deciding the proper manner in which to go about having needed repairs made on the house. After reading of her confusion, in a letter 5 June 1941, Woodson responded with another letter of 11 June 1941; this time a little impatience towards her indecisiveness, or more appropriately, her lack of knowledge in such matters, was made evident. Woodson wrote:

I do not understand how you are proceeding. Your letter has a ring of that of an irresponsible person who does not know how to do things. You ask me whether

¹¹⁹Carter G. Woodson to Bessie Yancey, 28 March 1941, Carter G. Woodson Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C..

¹²⁰Ibid., 19 May 1941.

or not a carpenter should be employed to stop a leak on the roof. This is the first thing to be done to the house. . . . It would be a lost of money to have the house painted and papered while it is leaking to destroy the paper and paint. Why call on me to decide the matter? If the house was on fire you would not ask me whether or not to call someone to put the fire out.¹²¹

He then proceeded, however, to outline a procedure for having the repairs done. He continued:

I have sent you some money. What have you done with it? Have you paid such bills? You must be systematic. I am a business man, and you must deal with me in a businesslike way. . . .

When you address me or any other relative you should not address me as Dr. Carter G. Woodson That form is appropriate for business letters. It should never be used between friend[s] and relatives. [Bessie had recently addressed her brother as Dr. Carter G. Woodson in her letter.]¹²²

Although Woodson appeared to be somewhat firm with Bessie, in the next sentence he proceeded to assist her in mapping out a protocol, and he urged her to keep her salutations, to him, on a personal level.

Bessie sent a letter dated 2 July 1941; revealing that she had lost her job. In a letter dated 7 July 1941, Woodson expressed sorrow for her job lost and wrote:

I shall have to look out for you until you find something to do. Look for something requiring brain power. Avoid meniality. There is nothing in it. It is like a political job; it does not pay much at best. It is too uncertain. Can you sell books? We have many to sell. . . . Figure out exactly how much money you need¹²³

¹²¹Ibid., 11 June 1941.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ibid., 7 July 1941.

Once again, Woodson displayed compassion and concern for his sister, as well as, the desire to be instrumental in providing some of her financial needs. He also expressed the value of pursuing situations which would continue to be mentally stimulating. They, eventually, decided that it was a good idea for Bessie to seek a job with the ASNLH. Woodson then had her order the latest typewriter from the Underwood Elliot Fisher Co.. He also urged her to get a typewriter table. He told her that she should learn touch typing, and to let him know when she was sufficiently advanced to begin work.

CHAPTER II

DR. WOODSON'S VIEWS ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOCIETY

Certainly one of the best ways to ascertain what a person's views and thoughts are, as it relates to different aspects of society, is to listen to the individual in a conversation or presentation, or read some discourse or other literary material which the person has written. Today, about the best source of information reflecting Dr. Woodson's thoughts, especially relating to educational, social, economical, and political concerns of African-Americans, is found in his book titled The Mis-Education of the Negro.¹²⁴ In fact, it has been one of his most popular works and rediscovered today. Woodson portrays the society African-Americans found themselves in, during the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Dr. Romero (a former associate editor at the ASNLH) believed that The Mis-Education of the Negro is the closest Woodson ever came to writing an autobiography.¹²⁵ In his own words Woodson wrote:

¹²⁴Carter G. Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1933).

¹²⁵Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 256.

Herein are recorded not opinions but the reflections of one who for forty years has participated in the education of the black, brown, yellow and white races in both hemispheres and in tropical and temperate regions. Such experience, too, has been with students in all grades from kindergarten to the university. The author, moreover, has traveled around the world to observe not only the modern school systems in various countries but to study the special systems set up by private agencies and governments to educate the natives in their colonies and dependencies. Some of these observations, too, have been checked against more recent studies on a later tour.

Discussing herein the mistakes made in the education of the Negro, the writer frankly admits that he has committed some of these errors himself. In several chapters, moreover, he specifically points out wherein he himself has strayed from the path of wisdom. This book, then, is not intended as a broadside against any particular person or class, but it is given as a corrective for methods which have not produced satisfactory results. . . . ¹²⁶

This book was written a little over sixty years ago during a time when European-American philanthropists discontinued their funding to the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). Woodson's disappointment with these developments may have promoted more candor in his views, as he looked towards the African-American communities for financial support. Yet, he was critical of African-Americans because they allowed themselves to be misused by others.

Ms. Willie M. Miles (project coordinator at the ASNLH) pointed out that practically all of the articles written in the Negro History Bulletin in 1944 and 1945, and appearing without an author's name, were usually written by

¹²⁶Woodson, The Mis-education of the Negro, XXIX; Preface to the book.

Woodson.¹²⁷ These sources were also used to ascertain Woodson's thoughts dealing with the African-American community.

Dr. Woodson was about fifty-eight years old when this book was first published. His overall thesis was that when African-Americans were found living unsuccessfully, it was usually due to their mis-education; and this situation resulted in adverse effects not only educationally, but socially, economically, politically, and psychologically. He further contended that the African-Americans' severance from the truth surrounding their historical heritage resulted from the activities of those who did not have the best interest, of African-Americans, in mind.¹²⁸ This act of presenting inaccurate information concerning historical events (mistory, to coin a new term), and the providing of learning which does not adequately prepare the individual to successfully earn a living, constitutes mis-education.¹²⁹

Throughout all of Woodson's writings, lectures and the like, it is unquestionably clear that his overall concern was to educate. Practically all of his concerns, views and beliefs, relate back to the type of education African-Americans received.

Woodson distinguished between two types of

¹²⁷Miles, Interview by author, 27 April 1992.

¹²⁸Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 1-2.

¹²⁹Ibid., 1-4.

education. They are described as (1) "education" (with quotation marks), and (2) education (without the quotation marks). The former is an education which does not provide information to enable the individual to earn a living, or function in a manner which would contribute to one's betterment; and it contributes to low self-esteem. This type of education is also indicative of Woodson's concept of mis-education. Woodson does not think that formal education is bad, for he himself pursued formal education to the point of receiving a terminal degree. He just thought that it oftentimes did not provide a more direct means for people to better themselves, specifically, in the case of African-Americans.¹³⁰ The latter refers to a type of education which provided knowledge to enable the individual to improve one's living condition. This type of education also promoted critical thinking, common sense, and high self-esteem.

It is very important to consider Woodson's views in light of his overall philosophy which related to an appreciable sense of equity for all humans regardless of race, or color. The following passage portrayed his deep concern:

Only by careful study of the Negro himself and the life which he is forced to lead can we arrive at the proper procedure in the crisis. The mere imparting of information is not education. Above all things, the

¹³⁰Woodson certainly did not object to people learning the basic fundamentals, or even philosophy, psychology, history, etc., for examples. He simply thought that beyond the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, education should (to borrow a concept from medicine) holistically serve to the betterment of all humans.

effort must result in making a man think and do for himself just as the Jews have done inspite of universal persecution.¹³¹

Educational Views

Concerning the teaching of history to children, Woodson thought that it should begin at an early age. Waiting until the sixth or seventh grade to expose students to a book loaded with facts and dates was a mistake, he contended.¹³² He thought that history could not be well taught without relating the matter to the lives of the students. A strategy he proposed involved having students begin with a history of their family, then study the history of some worthy family in their community. Soon the student would eventually be prepared to study the history of the county, state and then the nation.¹³³ "To begin, instead, with a study of the nation's history," Woodson argued, "when the students have no idea of the meaning of the effort usually results in failure except in the case of those with rare memories who may later stumble upon the meaning of what they have memorized."¹³⁴ Furthermore, Dr. Woodson thought that the described strategy

¹³¹Woodson, Mis-Education of the Negro, XXX.

¹³²"History for Children," Negro History Bulletin, VIII June 1944, 205; author is not indicated, however, according to Ms. Willie M. Miles, it was authored by Woodson.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid.

would allow students to gradually understand what they saw about them and what was related to it. Thus, children would form habits of trying to explain what they see by going in the past of it, and the history would become a "simple task of trying to explain the present by the past and the past by the present."¹³⁵

Woodson was in disagreement with certain African-Americans who contended that the teaching of African-American history to young children would cause a race problem, prematurely. They suggested that such things not be taught until African-Americans were in college. Dr. Woodson's response to that thesis was the fact that the race question confronted the African-American child daily.¹³⁶ It greeted him/her at home, in the streets, through the press, and at church. Woodson, furthermore, found it disappointing that the school neglected their responsibility to teach the truth, while others presented inaccurate information. Besides, college professors had shown, as Woodson pointed out, that it was not easy to change racial attitudes of youths, after they reached adolescence.¹³⁷

Woodson was critical of parents who required their children to hate and shun all races except their own. He

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 134-35.

¹³⁷Ibid.

considered this practice as foolish and found that such parents went to their graves hating those who had never done any wrong to them. He exclaimed: "This is the cause of the troubles of the world today; and children if thus informed early enough, may see their error and learn to do for brotherhood what their parents can never be expected to do."¹³⁸

Dr. Woodson also took issue with the detrimental impact formal schooling had on the psychological well-being of African-Americans in relation to self worthiness and self-esteem.¹³⁹ Woodson explained:

The "educated Negroes" have the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools Negroes are taught to admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin and the Teuton and to despise the African. Of the hundreds of Negro high schools recently examined by an expert in the United States Bureau of Education only eighteen offer a course taking up the history of the Negro, and in most of the Negro colleges and universities where the Negro is thought of, the race is studied only as a problem or

¹³⁸ "Keeping the Needs of the Children in Mind," (Children's Page), Negro History Bulletin, IX January 1946, 85; authors name does not appear, however, Ms. Willie M. Miles indicated that Dr. Woodson wrote all of the articles in 1945 and 1946 bearing no name, in the NHB.

¹³⁹ Ibid. , 3; "A Hope Sign," (Children's Page), Negro History Bulletin, IX June 1945, 205; Perhaps Woodson escaped much of the undesirable affects of formal schooling due to his much delayed enrollment. He did not really attend grade school until he was about nine years old, and that was infrequent as he alternated with two other brothers (they were usually needed to help work their father's tobacco field); and he did not attend high school until he was 19 years old, although he had become familiar with the rudiments of the three R's. Fortunately, by then, he had already received a strong foundation, fortified with love and high self-esteem, from his parents.

dismissed as of little consequence. For example, an officer of a Negro university, thinking that an additional course on the Negro should be given there, called upon a Negro Doctor of Philosophy of the faculty to offer such work. He promptly informed the officer that he knew nothing about the Negro. He did not go to school to waste his time that way. He went to be educated in a system which dismisses the Negro as a nonentity.¹⁴⁰

In essence, Woodson discovered approximately sixty years ago that the American school system was the major "suppressive device" functioning as a hindrance towards proper education of African-Americans.¹⁴¹ He continued:

The thought of the inferiority of the Negro is drilled into him in almost every book he studies. If he happens to leave school after he masters the fundamentals, before he finishes high school or reaches college, he will naturally escape some of the bias and may recover in time to be of service to his people.

. . . The large majority of the Negroes who have put on the finishing touches of our best colleges are all but worthless in the development of their people. If after leaving school they have the opportunity to give out to Negroes what the traducers of the race would like to have it learn such persons may thereby earn a living at teaching or preaching what they have been taught but they never become a constructive force in the development of the race. The so-called school, then becomes a questionable factor in the life of this despised people.¹⁴²

. . . to handicap a student by teaching him that his black face is a curse and that his struggle to change his condition is hopeless [*sic*] is the worst sort of lynching. It kills one's aspirations and dooms him to vagabondage and crime.¹⁴³

Woodson further emphasized the fact that African-Americans were taught to think of themselves as inferior,

¹⁴⁰Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 1-2.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 3, 96-97, 111, 122.

¹⁴²Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁴³Ibid.

cursed, and unworthy to pursue worthwhile goals. "Why not exploit, enslave, or exterminate a class that everybody is taught to regard as inferior?", Dr. Woodson exclaimed.¹⁴⁴ Hence, exhaustive futile exercises in areas of theology, business, journalism, economics, history, literature, and philosophy, were a waste of time; and, he explained, misdirected African-Americans thus trained .¹⁴⁵

Dr. Woodson contended that as African-Americans spent time studying about the things that were or might be outdated, they found themselves ill-prepared to meet the tasks at hand. Deprived of influence in the political arena, as well as, lacking preparation for participation in the industrial development of this country, "it soon became evident that African-Americans were losing ground in the basic things of life." He further contended that African-Americans consistently found themselves playing "catch-up," receiving industrial education comprised of techniques already discarded. And generally barred from higher pursuits by trade unions, African-Americans found no opportunities for the development of captains of industry, virtually placing them in a no-win situation.¹⁴⁶

Woodson also saw a classical education, formulated from advanced phases of literature, philosophy, and politics,

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 3.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 3-4.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 13-14.

as useless, because African-Americans had been restricted to functioning only in the lower spheres of the social order. Hence, a large supply of thinkers and philosophers had not been allowed to develop due to the preoccupation of combating segregation, and the feverish attempt not to retrogress in the struggle.¹⁴⁷ He wrote:

The Negro trained in the advanced phases of literature, philosophy, and politics has been unable to develop far in using his knowledge because of having to function in the lower spheres of the social order. Advanced knowledge of science, mathematics and languages, moreover, has not been much more useful except for mental discipline because of the dearth of opportunity to apply such knowledge among people who were largely common laborers in towns or peons on the plantations. The extent to which such higher education has been successful in leading the Negro to think, which above all is the chief purpose of education has merely made him more of a malcontent when he can sense the drift of things and appreciate the impossibility of success in visioning conditions as they really are.¹⁴⁸

Dr. Woodson also recognized the fact that African-Americans who departed America and were, therefore, far removed from the influences of slavery and segregation, had done far better than those subjected to such degradation in America. Men, such as, Roland Hayes and Henry O. Tanner, rose to higher heights, once they had recovered from their "mis-education."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 11-14.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 14-15.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 15-16; Roland Hayes was a concert singer (although this is not a good example based on the information supplied by Woodson.) Henry O. Tanner went to Paris in 1891 and under the instruction of Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant, he mastered the principles of art.

It appeared, to Woodson, that in every facet of schooling, African-Americans and various ethnic groups, received lesser attention than that of certain others, and found themselves belittled or decried. Avoidance of the facts surrounding the progress made by the Africans was done in monumental proportions.¹⁵⁰ To support his contention Woodson wrote:

How, then, did the education of the Negro take such a trend? The people who maintained schools for the education of certain Negroes before the Civil War were certainly sincere; and so were the missionary workers who went South to enlighten the freedmen after the results of that conflict had given the Negroes a new status. . . . This undertaking, too, was more of an effort toward social uplift than actual education. Their aim was to transform the Negroes, not to develop them.

In geography the races were described in conformity with the program of the usual propaganda to engender in whites a race hate of the Negro, and in the Negroes contempt for themselves.¹⁵¹

He continued by giving examples in several areas of learning:

A poet of distinction was selected to illustrate that physical features of the white race, a bedecked chief of a tribe those of the red, a proud warrior the brown, a prince the yellow, and a savage with a ring in his nose the black. The Negro, of course, stood at the foot of the social ladder.

The description of various parts of the world was worked out according to the same plan. The parts inhabited by the Caucasian were treated in detail, less attention was given to the yellow people, still less to the red, very little to the brown, and practically none to the black race. . . .

From the teaching of science the Negro was likewise eliminated. The beginnings of science in various parts of the Orient were mentioned, but the Africans' early advancement in this field was omitted. Students were not told that ancient Africans of the interior knew

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 17.

sufficient science to concoct poisons for arrowheads, to mix durable colors for paintings, to extract metals from nature and refine them for development in the industrial arts. Very little was said about the chemistry in the method of Egyptian embalming which was the product of mixed breeds of Northern Africa, now known in the modern world as "colored people."

In the study of language in school pupils were made to scoff at the Negro dialect as some peculiar possession of the Negro which they should despise rather than directed to study the background of this language as a broken-down African tongue--in short to understand their own linguistic history, which is certainly more important for them than the study of French Phonetics or Historical Spanish Grammar. To the African language as such no attention was given except in the case of the preparation of traders, missionaries and public functionaries to exploit the natives. This number of persons thus trained, of course, constituted a small fraction hardly deserving attention.

From literature the African was excluded altogether. He was not supposed to have expressed any thought worth knowing. The philosophy in the African proverbs and in the rich folklore of that continent was ignored to give preference to that developed on the distant shores of the Mediterranean. Most missionary teachers of the freedmen, like most men of our time, had never read the interesting books of travel in Africa, and had never heard of the Tarikh Es-Soudan.

In the teaching of fine arts these instructors usually started with Greece by showing how that art was influenced from without, but they omitted the African influence which scientists now regard as significant and dominant in early Hellas. They failed to teach the student the Mediterranean Melting Pot with the Negroes from Africa bringing their wares, their ideas and their blood therein to influence the history of Greece, Carthage, and Rome. Making desire father to the thought, our teachers either ignored these influences or endeavored to belittle them by working out theories to the contrary.¹⁵²

Of even greater concern to Woodson was how these thoughts invaded the teaching of the professions. His findings revealed the following:

Negro law students were told that they belonged to the

¹⁵²Ibid., 17-20.

most criminal element in the country; and an effort was made to justify the procedure in the seats of injustice where law was interpreted as being one thing for the white man and a different thing for the Negro. In constitutional law the spinelessness of the United States Supreme Court in permitting the judicial nullification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments was and still is boldly upheld in our few law schools. In medical schools Negroes were likewise convinced of their inferiority in being reminded of their role as germ carriers. Little emphasis was placed on the immunity of the Negro from diseases like yellow fever and influenza which are so disastrous to whites. Yet, the whites were not considered inferior because of this differential resistance to these plagues.

In history, of course, the Negro had no place in this curriculum. He was pictured as a human being of the lower order, unable to subject passion to reason, and therefore useful only when made the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for others. . . . You might study the history as it was offered in our system from the elementary school throughout the university, and you would never hear Africa mentioned except in the negative. You would never thereby learn that Africans first domesticated the sheep, goat, and cow, developed the idea of trial by jury, produced the first stringed instruments, and gave the world its greatest boon in the discovery of iron. You would never know that prior to the Mohammedan invasion about one thousand A.D. these natives in the heart of Africa had developed powerful kingdoms which were later organized as the Songhay Empire on the order of that of the Romans and boasting of similar grandeur.¹⁵³

Woodson thought that African-Americans failed to recover from their slavish habit of berating themselves. He saw no progress being made in this respect, because the more mis-education African-Americans received the worse off they became. However, he thought that if African-Americans had relied on adult education, using a different educational approach, progress could have been realized. He believed this could have given them a new point of view in areas of economic

¹⁵³Ibid., 20-22.

enterprise and group cooperation; at least, he felt, this could have benefitted many since the average African-American had not been mis-educated to a state where one could not be guided to improving one's abilities. Woodson also thought that it was in the best interest of African-Americans to determine ways to eliminate segregation.¹⁵⁴

Woodson considered the situation for providing proper education for African-Americans to be most inappropriate. This is primarily because African-Americans did not have control over the process, and their educators having been taught from a biased perspective, only perpetuated the trend at the time. He stated:

Negroes have no control over their education and have little voice in their other affairs pertaining thereto. In a few cases Negroes have been chosen as members of public boards of education, and some have been appointed members of private boards, but these Negroes are always such a small minority that they do not figure in the final working out of the educational program. The education of the Negroes, then, the most important thing in the uplift of the Negroes, is almost entirely in the hands of those who have enslaved them and now segregate them.

With "mis-educated Negroes" in control themselves, however, it is doubtful that the system would be very much different from what it is or that it would rapidly undergo change. . . . Taught from books of the same bias, . . . of the same prejudices or by Negroes of enslaved minds, one generation of Negro teachers after another have served for no higher purpose than to do what they are told to do. . . . The present system under the control of the whites trains the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of his becoming white. . . . the present system is sound and will doubtless continue until this gives place to the saner policy of actual interracial

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 109.

cooperation. . . . ¹⁵⁵

Woodson was fair-minded and viewed situations objectively. When asked about European-Americans instructing African-Americans he stated:

To be frank we must concede that there is no particular body of facts that Negro teachers can impart to children of their own race that may not be just as easily presented by persons of another race if they have the same attitude as Negro teachers; . . . For certain work which temporarily some whites may be able to do better than the Negroes there can be no objection to such service, but if the Negro is to be forced to live in the ghetto he can more easily develop out of it under his own leadership. . . . ¹⁵⁶

The educator did not promote separate systems of schooling, but he did see the need for "common sense" schools, and teachers who understood the nature of the pupil before them. He also realized the importance and value of teachers who were empathetic towards those they instructed. As far as Woodson was concerned, this was a precursor to the purpose of "real education" which he saw as having the overall objective to inspire people to live more abundantly, to begin with life as they found it and to make it better.¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately, however, Woodson saw that in most cases, African-Americans graduating from colleges and universities were not able to

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 22-24.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., 28.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., 29; Woodson had this mind set when he taught in the Philippines from, 1903-1907. And as Dr. Patricia Romero pointed out, referring to his experience in the Philippines, "Carter Woodson taught English to a native population and helped sow seeds of progress in the minds of its sons and daughters."

relate to the masses of African-Americans. In his view, such graduates offered no program for changing the undesirable conditions about which they complained.

Woodson did not necessarily advocate the employment of African-American persons for the instruction of African-Americans. To this effect he stated, "What has the color to do with it? Such a worker may be white, brown, yellow, or red, if he is heart and soul with the people whom he would serve." However, the fact of the matter was that most European-American men in control of African-American universities, at the time, were not empathetic to African-American needs, according to Woodson. And he fervently believed that a real servant of the people (like a very effective educator) should live among them, think with them, be empathetic towards them, have humility for them, and even die for them. Hence, he thought that the greatest individual among the people should be the one to lead, by being a servant to the people.¹⁵⁸

Woodson also found that in European-American institutions of higher learning, the needs of African-Americans were not met, and there were few who profited from further instruction in the fundamentals of the particular discipline studied. Others became adept in the exploitation of their people, and a smaller number crossed the divide and

¹⁵⁸Ibid., 126, 127, 129, 130.

joined other groups in useful services.¹⁵⁹

Dr. Woodson strongly believed that it was important to build a university comprising individuals with vision, who had experienced life among people, and who were creative and beaming with ideas of "moving the world." Such a venture of establishing a university, he believed, should not be rushed into construction, and should not be based on the academic degrees a person held. He elaborated as follows:

When Dr. William Rainey Harper was establishing the University of Chicago he called to the headship of the various departments only men who had distinguished themselves in the creative world. Some had advanced degrees, and some had not. Several of them had never done any formal graduate work at all. All of them, however, were men whose thought was moving the world.¹⁶⁰

Woodson had high regards for education (without the quotation marks.) He thought that a good education was so important, especially, for the African-American children that he challenged them to work hard and to be successful. His style of instruction caused some of his colleagues at M Street High School in Washington, D.C., to insist that he was too hard on the children. However, he fervently believed that youth had to be prepared for the rough roads they faced. He believed that the children required a disciplined and challenging type of instruction, in order that they would be conditioned adequately.

He believed that education would elevate African-

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 32.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., 33-34.

Americans to an appreciable level of first-class citizenry, enable them to make their own decisions, think for themselves, and contribute to the development of their country economically and politically, as has been pointed out by Dr. R. Charles Long.¹⁶¹ Needless to say, Woodson was very strict and stern in this regard.

The overall message here, again, was to promote structure for meaningful education, that clearly related to the ways of life indigenous to the area where one intended to earn a living. He thought that this would best be done by African-American scholars, and possibly others, who had made significant accomplishments in their fields of study and could show others the way, while at the same time relate to the African-American experience.

Woodson wanted African-Americans to be able to: (1) receive an education which would prepare them to live a fruitful life; (2) decide what was good for them, educationally, economically, socially, and politically, without deliberate activities to inhibit them; (3) know the actual occurrences of historical events, especially related to Africans and African-Americans; and (4) develop their critical thinking abilities.

Assessing the discouragement of professional education among African-Americans, it was very clear to

¹⁶¹Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator and Prophet--Views on Education, 1875-50, 3.

Woodson that decisive efforts were exerted to prevent access to professional areas, such as, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, law and theater by African-Americans. Bearing on the psychology of African-Americans, such areas were treated, emphatically, as aristocratic spheres to which African-Americans should not aspire. As Woodson explained, there was a sense of fear harbored by many African-Americans, to even think about crossing the line over to the professional arena. Those who did venture to those areas, eventually, were starved out and not treated as professional class.¹⁶²

So a legacy was psychologically established in the minds of African-Americans, providing a precept to avoid successful aspirations, progressive thoughts, and preoccupations with earning a living in professional areas. To further strengthen this conditioning, Woodson indicated that these thought patterns were subsequently passed on to the children, and became imbibed in scores of them, dictating their career choices and their nature of being.¹⁶³ This, in essence, further exacerbated the ensuing demise of the African-American's ability to do for self.

Woodson recognized some other downfalls among other potential professional African-Americans. This time it was in the various areas of drama and music. Woodson carefully noted

¹⁶²Ibid., 75-80.

¹⁶³Ibid., 75.

that African-Americans had natural aptitude in these areas.¹⁶⁴ However, he thought that they failed to get proper training to further develop these talents and were mis-educated into believing that they needed no additional training. As a result, many ended up in questionable cafes, cabarets and night clubs of America and Europe.

The educator found that, generally, it was the mis-educated African-American who was more prone to hold on to ideas concerning the inability for them to succeed. And, especially, if it was some how backed up by "science," it was taken to have been written in stone.

Woodson gave much information about the significant contributions made on the part of Africans. He cited how they had their own ideas concerning the nature of the universe, time, and space, about appearance and reality, and about freedom and necessity. However, one was usually at a loss to find this vital information being taught in the schools as part of the curriculum.¹⁶⁵

In addition, the professor found that African-Americans and others were never really taught how to think. Their conception was to attend school and learn what other people had done, and then go out in life to imitate them. What this age needed was enlightened youth who would imbibe the spirit of heroes and heroines of the past, and answer the call of duty with equal nobleness of the soul. Woodson

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 78.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., 137.

realized that this was an arduous task; because of the widely held view that African-Americans were inferior, it was difficult to undo the damage which had prevailed without being corrected:

The Negro since freedom has gone along grinning, whooping, and "cutting capers" while the white man has applied himself to the task of defining the status of the Negro and compelling him to accept it as thus settled forever. While the Negro has been idle, propaganda has gone far ahead of history. Unfortunately, too, Negro "scholars" have assisted in the production of literature which gives this point of view.¹⁶⁶

Woodson was also concerned with the vocational preparation of African-Americans to earn a living; a matter he considered of utmost importance. As he saw it, African-Americans received instruction in areas which rapidly became obsolete:

Among people thus satisfied in the lower pursuits of life and sending their children to school to memorize theories which they never see applied, there can be no such thing as vocational guidance. Such an effort implies an objective; and in the present plight of economic dependence there is no occupation for which the Negro may prepare himself with the assurance that he will find employment. Opportunities which he has today may be taken from him tomorrow; and schools changing their curricula in hit-or-miss fashion may soon find themselves on the wrong track just as they have been for generations.¹⁶⁷

Woodson saw the urgent need for what he called "The New Program." He believed that African-Americans had gone back towards serfdom and that the time was overdue for new

¹⁶⁶Ibid., 143.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 159.

leadership with a different educational system.¹⁶⁸ The first matter that Woodson thought should be embraced, was the fact that African-Americans on a whole had not been educated; but that they had merely been informed of what others had done, and they themselves had not been permitted to do. He thought that they had been "shoved out of the regular schools through the rear door into obscurity of the backyard and told to imitate others whom they see from afar. . . . " So he thought that there was time for a "new program."¹⁶⁹

As part of this program Woodson saw a large role being played on the part of ministers and the church. He thought that men of scholarship and prophetic insight should be able to show the right way. And, especially, due to the fact that the church was an institution where African-Americans could exercise more freedom and independence, he saw this as an advantage for the implementation of a "new program." Finally, he thought that the "new program" should serve the lowly and make way for a new thought of "men as brethren and the idea of God as the lover of all mankind."¹⁷⁰ And Woodson emphatically stated that African-Americans must be taught how to think and develop job situations for themselves. Otherwise they will gradually die out in the bread line of the ghetto.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 144.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 147-50.

Social Views

Woodson raised an awareness of the fact that the condition African-Americans found themselves in, did not just happen. In order to grasp a more thorough conceptualization of the situation, one must look at the historical aspects of the development of education for the Negro. He emphasized that the plight of African-Americans involved a systematic undertaking after Emancipation, thus, "holding them down to the lowest order of society, nominally free but economically enslaved."

Analyzing this point of view, Woodson wrote:

If you can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action. When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself with what he will do. If you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If you make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one.¹⁷¹

He gave some examples:

To justify this position there have come forward a number of writers disguised as scientific investigators to prove by psychology and anthropology that the Negro is a sort of inferior being. They disregard the contention of the world's best scientists that no race is essentially inferior to any other race and that differences in civilization have resulted from varying opportunities and environments. Loath to give up this theory of superiority, however, they have devised various schemes to make a case for the natural superiority of the white man. Among these methods have been the collection of data intended to show that the Negro is naturally a criminal. Some have made psychological measurements of various types of humanity with a view to proving that the

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 84.

Negro is mentally weaker than other peoples. Others are busy writing history of the countries outside of Africa to prove that the Negroes in Africa are inferior to races without. . . .¹⁷²

An irate resident in an exclusive district protests against an invasion by Negroes because he has learned that these poverty-stricken people are carriers of disease and agents of crime; the Negroes, believing that such is truth, remain content in the ghetto. The irrational parent forces the separation of the races in some schools because his child must occupy a seat next to a pupil of "tainted" African blood; the educated Negro accepts this as inevitable and welcomes the makeshift for his people. . . . The Negro is forced to ride in a Jim Crow car to stamp upon him more easily the badge of his "inferiority"; the "educated Negro" accepts it as settled and abandons the fight against this social proscription.¹⁷³

In addition, Woodson wrote:

These rewriters of history fearlessly contended that slavery was a benevolent institution; the masters loved their slaves and treated them humanely; the abolitionists meddled with the institution which the masters eventually would have modified; the Civil War brought about by "fanatics" like William Llyod Garrison and John Brown was unnecessary; it was a mistake to make the Negro a citizen, for he merely became worse off by incurring the displeasure of the master class that will never tolerate him as an equal; and the Negro must live in this country in a state of recognized inferiority.¹⁷⁴

Many historians in the North were won over to these points of views, even though they ignored the findings from court records about slaveholding practices. The latter were the results of the efforts of people, such as, Miss Elizabeth Donnan, Mrs. H. T. Catterall, and Dr. Frederic Bancroft, all of whom spent many years investigating slavery and

¹⁷²Woodson, The Negro In Our History (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1972), 540-41.

¹⁷³Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 101-102.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 85.

slavetrading. Dr. Woodson was also not oblivious to the terrorism African-Americans faced if they had the audacity to exercise some interest, or desire to play a part in the political process.¹⁷⁵

Woodson proclaimed that it was those who had the audacity to seek out ways of reaching a state of egalitarianism, who were the real workers in carrying out a plan for interracial cooperation; cooperation, in Woodson's opinion implied equality of the participants involved in the matter at hand. He observed how others work out their plans behind closed doors, had them approved by a select few African-Americans who exercised practically no influence, and then employed others, or mixed staff, to carry out their program. This certainly was not his idea of interracial cooperation.¹⁷⁶

Woodson pointed out the disastrous results which developed when African-Americans became so mis-educated that they forgot about the downtrodden. They forgot about the ones who did not have the opportunity to learn to read or write, who have struggled, and died to enable them to enjoy what little freedom they did have. Woodson makes it clear that the so-called educated African-Americans became so preoccupied with patterning themselves after others that they threw away what they had, to obtain something which they thought they

¹⁷⁵Ibid., 86-88.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., 29.

needed.¹⁷⁷

The professor may appear to be a little partial when it came to some church matters because he was a devout Christian, as afore mentioned. However, he thought that the church served an extremely useful purpose for African-Americans; for one, he thought that the church was the only institution that African-Americans had any real control over. To these effects he stated:

The Negro church, however, although not a shadow of what it ought to be, is the great asset of the race. It is a part of the capital that the race must invest to make its future. The Negro church has taken the lead in education in the schools of the race, it has supplied a forum for the thought of the "highly educated" Negro, it has originated a large portion of the business controlled by Negroes, and in many cases it has made it possible for Negro professional men to exist. It is unfortunate, then, that these classes do not do more to develop the institution.¹⁷⁸

On the other hand, Dr. Woodson thought that African-Americans took on too many unscrupulous attitudes, indulging in heathen-like practices, and participating in various kinds of dissensions and strife.¹⁷⁹ He was scornful of the practice of certain theologians who defended segregation and the annihilation of one race by another, who justified serfdom and slavery, and who sanctioned the many ills of the ages. One can even say that he had utter opprobriousness towards spineless men who would compromise their manhood by accepting

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 53.

¹⁷⁸Ibid.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., 55.

segregation and the leadership of unscrupulous persons, thereby, losing self-respect.¹⁸⁰

Woodson presents a convincing argument that theology, is of a pagan origin. He cites the fact that persons like Albert Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas worked out a system based on the logic of Aristotle who was a pagan philosopher. "Aristotle believed neither in the creation of the world nor the immortality of the soul," Woodson argued. And the world, he contended, was confused with the discussion of absurdities as it is today, by those of prominent churchmen.¹⁸¹

Woodson understood the game that too many ministers played. While they were aware of the nonsense by which they exercised their religious activities, they, at the same time, knew that this served as a way of keeping the different religious factions separated. This practice enabled them to keep their followers and most likely their jobs. As he mentioned before, the masses were so busy doing what they were told do, they did not take time to stop and think about the meaning of their practices.¹⁸²

Dr. Woodson continued his analysis of the follies that he found inhabiting the confines of some Methodist and Baptist churches. He scorned the fact that these groups had

¹⁸⁰Ibid.

¹⁸¹Ibid., 60.

¹⁸²Ibid., 61.

not succeeded in coming together as one body, for their common welfare, and he thought that by keeping themselves in contention, the spirit of Christ did not abide among either.¹⁸³ Although the church has done some good, he contended, it has been too instrumental in preventing the union of diverse elements, and has kept the people too weak to overcome those that would traduce them. He held segregation in utmost discontent.¹⁸⁴

He further explained that African-American schools of theology were a miserable failure. They did not teach their students how to accept differences of opinion and to cooperate for the common good. Instead, they kept sectarian bias alive, along with old worn-out theories of unwise persons. They, in Woodson's opinion, failed to follow the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.¹⁸⁵

To add insult to injury, Woodson concluded that too often the minister was so mis-educated that he failed to offer meaningful information and enlightenment to the ones he was to serve, and often found himself devoting most of the time to using dead language and dead issues which were not relevant. By comparison, Woodson pointed out that some "uneducated preachers" filled far more benches because they understood the people, and were sometimes able to relate by meeting the

¹⁸³Ibid., 62.

¹⁸⁴Woodson, "And the Negro Loses His Soul."

¹⁸⁵Ibid., 64.

people's social needs and solving some of their vexing problems. Woodson also made note of the fact that too often persons of just about any walk of life were able to get into the ministry, thus making the job of the honest minister, who was trying to do his duty, that much more difficult.¹⁸⁶

Dr. Woodson was very concerned about the African-American youth whom he thought could be held in the church if the humanitarian trend in religion through systematized education was employed. Unfortunately, however, African-American Christianity had failed to conceive of social uplifting as a duty of the church. And so Woodson saw that African-American children, having not been adequately trained in religious matters, often succumbed to delinquent behavior. As a result, they took up moonshining, gambling, and racketeering, as well as, derived great joy in smoking, drinking, and fornication as diversions.¹⁸⁷

Woodson rather scorned African-Americans for accepting any conditions in life which forced segregation upon them. He thought that too often they were too prone, too amenable, too short-sighted to accept this norm. He was also of the opinion that the championing of the likes of segregation exacerbated the plight of African-Americans. He thought that they tried to attack the problem, by not really dealing with it. He seemed to think that African-Americans

¹⁸⁶Ibid., 68.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., 69-70.

should have been more adamant in refusing segregation and not even accept separatism. Perhaps it is because too many mis-educated African-Americans lacked vision to see a brighter tomorrow, or a vision to grasp real freedom and to demand an egalitarian ethos.¹⁸⁸

Woodson found, too often, that African-Americans engaged in what he called a systematized method of exploitation. In fact, he said that it was usually the mis-educated African-Americans who were just as bad as those who shun African-Americans, in holding the lesser of the "race" behind. He also found that, on occasion, ministers, professional men, and others, used segregation as a means to their own end, by misleading those who could not think too well. These exploiters provoked the less fortunate into isolating themselves, from European-Americans (who did not want to associate with African-Americans.) Thus isolated, the exploiters now had a faction from which to receive money.¹⁸⁹

Dr. Woodson attacked the so-called leaders in the African-American community who exercised extremely poor leadership. He held the view that what was desperately needed was the participation of more individuals who would sacrifice more of their time and energy, and assume definite tasks for improving their communities. In other words, he thought that

¹⁸⁸Ibid., 100-103.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., 60-61.

the race needed more workers and not leaders.¹⁹⁰ Woodson also suggested that members of the race ask questions, when individuals professed to be concerned about their welfare, and inquire what they had done or were doing for humanity.

It was clear to Woodson, that African-Americans were led into the deplorable state of the ghetto. They were constrained to do the biddings of others, became hopelessly poverty-stricken, and made to despise their own possibilities and develop into parasites. But he was of the belief that through service, African-Americans could work out programs that would ameliorate their own circumstances, would educate the masses in earning a honest living, realizing progress in self-development, and would make significant contributions to modern culture. In essence, he thought that through service within the ranks, African-Americans would come out of the ghetto conditions of life.¹⁹¹

Woodson observed a condition relating to the inability of African-Americans to take instructions from African-American supervisors. This display of the "plantation-mentally syndrome," has seen a stifling legacy which has contributed to the inability of African-Americans to work together more productively. This behavior in turn, was the result of another technique used to array one African-American against another. By doing so, control was maintained

¹⁹⁰Ibid., 118.

¹⁹¹Ibid., 118-119.

over them. This kept them in distinct factions, and was clearly the result of deliberate efforts to mis-educate them.¹⁹²

Woodson thought that the mental state of the masses had to be reconstructed before they could be brought out of the wilderness. However, he saw too many examples of professionals in the community, setting improper examples, as a result of displaced priorities; Woodson found this to be most depressing. Even worse was the practice of professionals who took monetary advantages over impoverished fellow African-Americans; those professionals he considered to be leeches.¹⁹³

Woodson observed that the course of history showed that in times of so-called peace, those who delighted in doing evil to others started first with the helpless in the community. Next were those who were little able to protest intelligently, and finally were those who were of higher status.¹⁹⁴

Greatly lacking in their ability to think, Woodson found that the education of African-Americans involved mainly the imitation of other cultures which contributed to the enslavement of their minds. Woodson believed that African-

¹⁹²Ibid., 121-22.

¹⁹³Ibid., 124-25.

¹⁹⁴"Peace Efforts," (Children's Page), Negro History Bulletin, VII April 1944, 157.

Americans were also too accommodating when they were selected for experiments.¹⁹⁵

Dr. Woodson urged a reexamination of the nature of practice by African-American professionals, primarily, in the areas of law and medicine. He advocated what he called "a new type of professional man." As an opponent to the above mentioned thesis, Dr. Woodson pointed out many of the shortcomings present among the lawyers and physicians, which hindered them from effectively serving the African-American community. As part of this new approach he thought that the lawyers should be more involved in a systematic study of the principles of law and legal procedure. And in addition, they should study legal problems which would be encountered by the African-American lawyer in the life in which he must live. Further, they had to engage in painstaking research.¹⁹⁶

In each of these areas, Woodson advocated more indepth and continuing study of the profession for which one aligned oneself, in order to maintain a high level of expertise. He thought that the physicians needed to live up to what they were taught in medical school. This involved acquiring the necessary special equipment and setting up health programs in the needed communities. They too must engage in research, however, in medicine.¹⁹⁷ In professions

¹⁹⁵Ibid., 134.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., 174-75.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., 177-78.

involving the arts, professionals should look to expand their products throughout the world. Woodson believed that there was an important philosophical message in the African culture that the world needed to understand. For he believed that from it a new social program might develop; hence, Woodson perceived an opportunity for the African-American artist to become a world reformer. And he wondered if he would he see it and live, or continue the imitation of others and die.

It is Woodson's belief that all should find a new way to spend time, during times of peace and plenty, finding means for more cohesiveness among all persons in a community. He wrote:

We must start with the children in the schools to change out policy of selfishness to one of love and mercy when men will seek opportunities to make others happy rather than afflict them with disabilities and burden until life comes to mean less to them than death.¹⁹⁸

Dr. Woodson seemed to sum up this concern very succinctly.

He wrote:

It does not matter so much what the thing is called as what the thing is . . . if he [African-Americans] will struggle and make something of himself and contribute to modern culture, the world will learn to look upon him as an American rather than as one of an undeveloped element of the population.¹⁹⁹

Views On Economics

One of the first essentials in a civilization is to

¹⁹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., 200.

have a means for making a living. Woodson was probably too far ahead of the masses with his indepth discussion and exploration of the need for African-Americans to establish businesses for themselves. He was speaking about the formation of infrastructures. To give some examples, he first cited the African-American student polishing shoes to work his way through school. However, he quickly added that the African-American rarely thought of making a special study of the science related to the production and distribution of leather and its products. Thus, the African-American limited himself to hardly ever figuring into this sphere, thereby, failing to assure a way of 'making a living.'²⁰⁰

Another example cited was when an African-American boy was sent off to college by his mechanic father and, unfortunately, did not envision himself as becoming a mechanical engineer. He failed to realize the importance and advantage of building upon the foundation laid by his father, which could enhance his possibly becoming a contractor, or a consulting engineer.²⁰¹

Dr. Woodson did not forget about the females, when he cited how African-American women had often gone off to college to avoid, possibly, becoming a washerwoman as their mothers. He suggested that they should return with knowledge of physics, chemistry and business administration, in order to

²⁰⁰Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 38-39.

²⁰¹Ibid., 39.

form a modern steam laundry enterprise. This example, especially, shows equitable thinking on the part of Woodson. To actually suggest that females study science, not to mention the studying of physics and chemistry, is precisely in line with a matter of great concern today. Numerous efforts are being concentrated to encourage females to consider professions in the science arenas.

Woodson perceived this situation of short-sightedness towards the enhancement of one's future as pathetic, as is indicated in this quote: "The so-called education of Negro college graduates leads them to throw away opportunities which they have and to go in quest of those which they do not find."²⁰² At this point Dr. Woodson ridiculed his participation in the mis-education of himself:

On the contrary, the author [Woodson] studied Aristotle, Plato, Marsiglio of Padua, and Pascasius Rathbertus when he was in college. His friend who studied wool, however, is now independently rich and has sufficient leisure to enjoy the cultural side of life which his knowledge of the science underlying his business developed, but the author has to make his living by begging for a struggling cause.²⁰³

The major hindrance to economical growth, as Woodson saw it, was the mind set that permeated the African-American community: a concept of failure long before reasonable attempts were made to try the businesses. To this affect Woodson wrote:

²⁰²Ibid., 39.

²⁰³Ibid., p. 40.

Gossiping and scandal-mongering Negroes, of course, come to their assistance. Mis-educated . . . , such Negroes expect the Negro business man to fail anyway. . . . The mis-educated Negroes, then, stand by saying: "I told you so. Negroes cannot run business. My professors pointed that out to me years ago when I studied economics in college; and I never intend to put my money in any Negro enterprise." . . . The Negro business man, then, has not failed so much as he has failed to get support of Negroes who should be mentally developed sufficiently to see the wisdom of supporting such enterprises.²⁰⁴

Dr. Woodson was sensitive to the restraints that the African-American business person had to concern him or herself with, such as, insufficient time to read business literature and study the market, lack of intelligent guidance, or having to operate in the dark in a hit-or-miss fashion. What further exacerbated the situation, according to Woodson, was the failure of the African-American business owner to function in a cooperative plan, and to have some type of an apprenticeship program so that the knowledge of the business could be passed on. Too often, he explained, when the founder of the African-American business died, the business died with him; or it went into pieces soon after the deceased was gone, because no one had been close enough to him to learn the secrets of his success.²⁰⁵

Clearly, Woodson was not oblivious to the fact that oftentimes African-American business persons became, what he called, social "lions." They, basically, attempted to become extravagant and popular too quickly, while at the same time

²⁰⁴Ibid., 42.

²⁰⁵Ibid., 48-49.

they lost touch with the community and possibly provoked jealousy from competitors not so prosperous.²⁰⁶

Woodson focused a great deal on the preparation and attitudes of African-American business graduates, and how their schools failed to introduce them to apprenticeship programs. He believed that the training received gave them false hopes and not the proper instruction on the application of knowledge gained. Furthermore, from the standpoint of commerce and industry, African-Americans showed no mental ability, on a whole, to understand the situation they found themselves in; they just read themselves out of the sphere of significant business ventures, thus, allowing the intervention of foreign exploitations. To this effect Woodson wrote:

Foreigners see this opportunity as soon as they reach our shores and begin to manufacture and sell to Negroes especially such things as caps, neckties, and housedresses which may be produced at a small cost and under ordinary circumstances. The main problem with the Negro in this field, however, is salesmanship; that is where he is weak.²⁰⁷

The professor offered a remedy for what he viewed as a developing trend to eliminate African-Americans from the job market. He thought that African-Americans should immediately pool their earnings and organize industries in order to supply social and economic demands. Although African-Americans expressed reluctance in supporting their own businesses, he thought that it was precisely the lack of confidence in

²⁰⁶Ibid., 50-51.

²⁰⁷Ibid., 48.

themselves and their possibilities which mainly contributed to the businesses' failure.

Political Views

According to Woodson, certain political factions sought to avoid exposing African-Americans, and many others, to any thoughts of liberty and freedom. This practice, he pointed out, was employed even if it meant denying all students access to the written Constitution of the United States. Woodson further describes these persons as opponents of freedom and social justice who figured out an effective way to enslave the minds of African-Americans.²⁰⁸

Woodson observed cases where European-American children were also denied knowledge of government and political matters, in order to make sure that such information would not be received by African-Americans. However, as he pointed out, European-Americans fortunately had the opportunity to learn by contact, close observation, and actual participation in the affairs of government. Rather dreadful was the shortsightedness displayed: for immediate gain, many failed to see that in order to keep a person far above the level of vagabondage and crime, the person needed the stimulus of patriotism. Unfortunately, African-Americans were not allowed to become better citizens because they were not

²⁰⁸Ibid., 83-84.

allowed to participate in the government of this country.²⁰⁹ Instead, as Woodson observed, African-Americans only rendered for themselves Jim Crow jobs and disrespect. He also observed that the only time others showed any respect towards African-Americans was when they communicated with misleading politicians.²¹⁰

Woodson scorned the practice of the few elected African-Americans who he thought showed destitution in vision. They gave too little attention to the weighty problems of the nation and restricted themselves to matters of lynching, segregation and disfranchisement--things they had already learned by experience. He thought that focusing on broader problems would allow statesman to have more depth, thereby, increasing the value of his existence in the political arena, especially, when he advocated such things as public education, internal improvements, labor arbitration, the tariff, and the merchant marine.²¹¹

Political strategies for African-Americans was part of what Woodson called the "new Negro in politics." As far as he was concerned, the new African-American should concentrate on a power base, a position of strength, from which to influence change by engaging a decisive voting block. He thought that the new African-American in politics must not be

²⁰⁹Ibid., 90.

²¹⁰Ibid., 93.

²¹¹Ibid., 94-95.

a politician, but must be a responsible individual: one who would give the world something rather than extract something from it. He saw the new African-Americans as people seizing the opportunity to assert broadly by "visioning the whole social and economic order with their race as a part of it." In so doing they would "bring the elements together for common good," and in essence benefit all. Woodson says it best when he wrote:

History shows that it does not matter who is in power or what revolutionary forces take over the government, those who have not learned to do for themselves and have to depend solely on others never obtain any more rights or privileges in the end than they had in the beginning.²¹²

To say that the Negro cannot develop sufficiently in the business world to measure arms with present-day capitalists is to deny actual facts, refute [actual] history, and discredit the Negro as a capable competitor in the economic battle of life. No man knows what he can do until he tries. The Negro race has never tried to do very much for itself.²¹³

African-Americans have always had sufficient reason to be radical, but he points out that this radical posture has been to suffer and die internally to right their own wrongs. Woodson argued for a new radicalism of self-assertiveness.²¹⁴

Eyes do not a vision make. One need only use his or her mind to anticipate a better future, to garner aspirations of a better tomorrow, to dream of things that are yet to come and not be lost to an abyss of thoughtlessness. For Woodson

²¹²Ibid., 186.

²¹³Ibid., 187.

²¹⁴Ibid., 188.

has said that, "A mind that remains in the present atmosphere never undergoes sufficient development to experience what is commonly known as thinking." It is the result of the thinking process, that African-Americans would begin to overcome their mis-education, and, thereby, hurdle their many shortcomings educationally, socially, economically and politically. In the Mis-Education of the Negro Woodson becomes a "soldier for truth," having displayed the genius of mind to a prophetic look into the past, and find hope for a better future for African-Americans.

CHAPTER III

DR. WOODSON'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

Education, the acquisition of concepts to facilitate function and advancement in one's environment.²¹⁵

Consciously and rather unconsciously, all thinking persons seem to strive to gain information to function day to day, and to somehow discover ways of experiencing a better life. This is quite different than just "knowing," i.e., to merely have some knowledge of a thing. Having access to information that will promote highly desirable living conditions is invaluable, and probably worth its weight in gold.

Many have spent thousands of dollars,²¹⁶ if not millions, in order to acquire concepts which would enable them to efficiently and/or sufficiently engage in daily activities, as well as, advance one's condition. This seems to be the natural order, especially, of humans. Bearing much insight, James Madison has said.

²¹⁵A definition of education by this writer.

²¹⁶In the form of tuitions, workshops, conventions, etc.

Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own governours, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.²¹⁷

Usually, but certainly not always, the person providing this vital element--education--is the educator, who has the second most important job, duty, and responsibility in our society: the first being parenting. So it is with this "soldier for truth," in the form of Carter Godwin Woodson, that we now explore his contributions to education.

This "soldier for truth" has been quoted as saying that much of his mission was for the children.²¹⁸ He probably was quite aware that the future of any society, specifically, the American society, clearly rested with its children.

The impact of exposing African-Americans, European-Americans, and others to historical truths was enlightening. He accomplished this by reporting the participation of Africans and African-Americans in worthy events in America and the world. Significant as that might be, the Library of Congress displayed an exhibit of Woodson's contributions that he made to education and history, and the approximately five thousand documents he deposited there.

²¹⁷An inscription in the Madison Building, at the Library of Congress, by James Madison. This writer photographed it during the Carter G. Woodson Exhibit in Washington, D.C., April 1992; the word governours is as engraved.

²¹⁸Gillespie, Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 4.

The introduction to the "Education" section, at the exhibit, read, in part, as follows:

Having been a teacher, Woodson viewed education as the key to building African-American pride and eroding racial prejudice. . . .

In the Mis-Education of the Negro (1933), his best-known work, Woodson attacked the black educational establishment of his day. "The higher education of the Negro . . . has been largely meaningless imitation," he declared, claiming that African-American institutions of higher learning, by copying the curricula of white liberal arts colleges instead of tailoring their courses to the practical needs, innate talents, and culture of African-Americans, failed to prepare black students for racial leadership. . . .

Negro History Week, founded in 1926, was Woodson's major effort to educate all Americans about black achievements. His ideal of a "history of the world void of national bias, race hate, and religious prejudice" prefigured modern efforts to have the stories of women, Native Americans, and other previously neglected groups included in educational curricula.²¹⁹

One can determine from the above quotation, that the ideas of this "soldier for truth" were timeless.

One of Woodson's major objectives in education was to provoke, or stimulate African-Americans to engage in critical thinking: a theme that arises in much of his educational literature. To this effect he stated: "The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, however, has no special brand for the solution of the race problem except to learn to think."²²⁰

²¹⁹Library of Congress, Madison Building, Moving Back Barriers: The Legacy of Carter G. Woodson. "Education" section introduction. Photographs of the exhibit by the author. April, 1992.

²²⁰Woodson, The Mis-Education of the Negro, 195.

According to Dr. Bonnie Gillespie, Woodson criticized the methods employed in teaching and learning as being outdated. He raised this issue around 1933, and the teaching and learning methods, and practices which he objected to are as follows:

(1) the teaching of facts and figures--without the wherewithal to make what Woodson called "the right interpretation;" (2) the avoidance of teaching the contributions of all races and ethnic groups in mainstream history; (3) the failure of our system to significantly teach students how to think--as opposed to its encouragement of the regurgitation of facts that are memorized for such purposes as passing an examination or getting a job; and (4) the instructing of students that is void of inspiration and motivation.²²¹

Dr. Gillespie also cited Woodson's ideal of both American and European contemporary education:

(1) it would not only teach students how to retain facts and figures--but also imbue them with a means of interpreting them. To be intellectually unable to interpret facts is to be like a ship lost at sea with no compass or knowledge of the stars.

(2) Moreover under this ideal Utopia the educational system would teach not just the contribution of mainly the WASPs (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) Americans as it

²²¹Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson: Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administration, 2; Especially, today, one can find articles relating to the concerns of this "soldier for truth," published, or advertised, in some of our popular educational magazines. In Educational Leadership, May 1992, one will find an announcement for the Twelfth International Conference on Critical Thinking In Educational Leadership, December 1991/January 1992, such articles as "Multicultural Education: For Freedom's Sake," and "Multicultural Awareness Collages" are printed. Also in another issue of Educational Leadership, September 1992, one will find "Linking a City's Culture to Student's Learning." Yet still another issue of Educational Leadership, May 1992, features the article "How Portfolios Motivate Reluctant Writers." And in Kappan, April 1992, the article "Oakland Moves to Create Its Own Multicultural Curriculum" appears, to name a few.

does now, but rather those of all ethnic groups like Negroes, Asians, Hispanics as well as the Native Americans, other Europeans and Africans. To learn only a few deeds, contributions and successful/victorious wars of only a single race is to be short-changed in the world marketplace of historical drama. The educational system in Woodson's belief must open up itself to such notions if it is to progress.

(3) Woodson's ideal system of education would further teach students how to think. Thinking is a cerebral process. It also involves the analytical viewing of various sides of a subject. Thinking is also a creative activity which helps us to be truly human. . . .

(4) Woodson's conception of the "right kind of education" is one that "inspires."²²²

One source pointed out the fact that Woodson received his education during the Progressive Era, during a time of rapid urbanization, industrialization, and immigration.²²³ Such progressive educators like John Dewey and Charles Beard emphasized using the "scientific method" in education as an instrument for human betterment.

Young thought that Woodson was "influenced by the liberal faith in scientific investigation and education as twin pillars of progress," and shared Dewey's ideal of education which would improve conditions. (Dewey called for the improvement of pedagogy which would involve the learner in the process of seeking solutions to practical problems.)²²⁴

²²²Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson: Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 2-3.

²²³Young, "The Educational Philosophies of Booker T. Washington and Carter G. Woodson: A Liberating Praxis," 108.

²²⁴Ibid., 109; Otey Scruggs, "Carter G. Woodson, the Negro History Movement, and Africa," Pan African Journal, VII (Spring 1974), 40.

The Journal

Woodson founded the JNH to educate and encourage European-Americans to perceive African-Americans in a more positive way, as well as, enable African-Americans to acquire more self-esteem and to promote higher achievement. He tried to maintain a balance between academic and amateur historians and encouraged African-American intellectuals.²²⁵ He covered mainly events occurring in the nineteenth century, however, he also included articles from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries as well.

Woodson started publishing the Journal of Negro History in 1916, less than one year after establishing the ASNLH. No doubt he became familiar with scholarly material, such as, journals and other types of discourses, during the time he spent at the University of Chicago and Harvard University. Woodson could very well have thought that by producing material about African-Americans using a format which could relate to academia, more respect would eventually be rendered. In a letter from one of his former professors at Harvard, the eminent historian Edward Channing (the "provocative professor,") commended Woodson for his progress with the JNH:

²²⁵Ibid.

. . . I have read with interest the separate numbers of your "Journal" as they came out and think that you are doing a great job. . . .²²⁶
 I value the publication very much and hope you will be able to go on with it . . . This decade I am taking for an intensive study of our people and of their achievements. . . .²²⁷

Another Harvard Professor, Ephraim Emerton, expressed his admiration and wrote:

I just had the opportunity to glance over the first volume of the Journal of Negro History, which you were kind enough to send to me. It impresses me as most credible in every respect, in the seriousness of it's articles as well as in the excellence of it's outward appearance. I sincerely hope you will be able to maintain the high standard that you have set yourself and thus give one more proof - if proof were needed - of the forward of your gifted race. . . .²²⁸

Rather impressively, Woodson was able to receive subscription requests from politicians like Senator Medill McCormick from Illinois, then chairman of the United States Senate:

I enclose a check for a small sum. Will you consider it a subscription as of the 1st of next month? If you will remind me in season, I shall be glad to send

²²⁶Edward Channing to Carter G. Woodson, 30 July 1917, Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents, 1803-1936, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C..

²²⁷Ibid., 6 May 1918, Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents, 1803-1936.

²²⁸Ephraim Emerton to Carter G. Woodson, 10 August 1917, letter on Harvard University--Cambridge stationary, Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents, 1803-1936, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C..

you a check for a like amount upon the 1st of
October²²⁹

Victor F. Lawson, a publisher at the Chicago Daily News during this time, saw the ASNLH as a worthwhile organization enough to make a monetary donation. He wrote:

I send you herewith check to the order of The Association For The Study Of Negro Life and History, Incorporated, for \$50 as a contribution to the work of the Association²³⁰

In a tribute to Woodson, written in 1950, Dubois contended that the Journal of Negro History was Woodson's most important contribution. He said:

[Woodson] did not usually attend meetings of scientists in history; he was not often asked to read papers on such occasions; for the most part so far as the professors of history in this country were concerned he was forgotten and passed over; and yet few men have made so deep an imprint as Carter G. Woodson on thousands of scholars in historical study and research Indeed his service to history was not so much his books as his editorship of the Journal, which brought into print some of the best scholars in this branch of history.²³¹

Many writers would probably disagree slightly with Dubois concerning the relative importance of Woodson's textbooks,

²²⁹Medill McCormick, Illinois Senator, to C. G. Woodson, 16 March 1920, letter, Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents, 1803-1936, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C..

²³⁰Victor F. Lawson, to C. G. Woodson, 20 February 1923, letter on Chicago Daily News stationary at 15 North Wells Street, Chicago, Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents, 1803-1936, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C..

²³¹Goggin, "Countering White Racist Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson and the Journal of Negro History," Journal of Negro History (Fall 1983): 355; the omission of commas in this quotation is as in source.

JNH, NHB, and other writings. These sources were more effective in reaching the general masses of people.

Dr. Goggin believed that without the JNH and annual meetings of the ASNLH, many African-Americans would not have been able to publish their work nor have any opportunity to articulate their ideas among peers. In so doing, encouragement, and enhancement towards scholarly pursuits were achieved. ²³²

Goggins pointed out that several European-American writers, whose views differed from the European-American historical establishment, would not have had the opportunity to publish articles had it not been for the Journal of Negro History. Herbert Aptheker recalled:

Sometime in the 1930s (I think) I submitted a long paper on "The Negro in the Union Navy" to the editor of the American Historical Review . . . Guy Stanton Ford replied, he liked the essay but suggested that if I cut drastically the AHR might think of publishing it as a communication! I sent it to Woodson and he published it in the JNH . . . I have a vague feeling that something like this happened with my paper on "Maroons within the Present Limits of the U.S." and it appeared in the JNH Thereafter I rarely bothered with the chauvinist journals. ²³³

Woodson had full reign as to what would be placed in the Journal until 1937. During that year an editorial board was established and consisted of Sterling Brown, James B.

²³²Ibid.

²³³Ibid., 360.

Browning, Lorenzo Greene, Luther P. Jackson, Lawrence Reddick, and Arthur A. Schomburg.²³⁴

As a result of the editorial policy formulated in the JNH, this "soldier for truth" combatted the inaccurate historiography of many European-Americans and pursued his lifelong aim of presenting a positive image of African-Americans. The JNH chronicled the African-American experience in the Americas and Africa, and promoted the study of African-American history.²³⁵

It was Woodson's belief that a way to achieve an appreciable state of egalitarianism, especially, where African-Americans and European-Americans were concerned, all Americans needed to be exposed to an accurate historical perspective of the African-American past. On topics that he thought needed examining, Woodson would solicit articles for publication. He would write to interested individuals and ask them to contribute essays on various topics. He maintained that there were many areas, if not all, in need of reexamination of the African-American experience. Thus, through the years he wrote and published fifteen additional articles that revealed the rich and historical contributions of African-Americans.

Woodson's relationship with European-American writers was as good as other editors who accepted or rejected

²³⁴Ibid.

²³⁵Ibid.

articles based on worthiness. Some of the better known European-American historians who published were Kenneth Stampf, Richard Hofstadter, Arthur Link, and Kenneth Porter.²³⁶ Others like Eric Goldman, from John Hopkins, and Melville Herskovits, from Northwestern, encouraged their students to submit papers to the JNH.²³⁷

Professor Evarts B. Greene, historian at Columbia University who surveyed the JNH in 1932, which was the seventeenth year since it was established concluded: "There is nothing more thoroughly worthwhile in your special field of historical activity than the publication of the sort of documents which have appeared in your JNH. . . ." ²³⁸

Rayford W. Logan wrote an evaluation after about twenty years of its publication. He stated that it was started and maintained not long after African-Americans were released from slavery. The JNH's volumes I-XX, dealt with African-Americans on every continent, covered every historical field from political to cultural, and included articles written in four different languages.²³⁹

Woodson actually covered just about every aspect of the African-American experience. He managed to publish

²³⁶Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 231.

²³⁷Goggin, "Countering White Racist Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson and the Journal of Negro History," 361.

²³⁸Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 219.

²³⁹Ibid., 220.

articles dealing with the slave trade, African-American culture, the slave family, religion, the caretaking of slaves, and abolition activities and anti-slavery movements. Biographies on famous African-Americans were included also.²⁴⁰ By including articles on anti-slavery and abolitionism, Woodson hoped to stimulate racial harmony and cooperation between African and European-Americans. Many articles documented the anti-slavery activities of individuals and organizations in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain and challenged the widely accepted view that slaves were passive, docile, and happy. For example, the JNH chronicled the day-to-day outbursts of resistance and attempts to run away as African-Americans struggled desperately to survive.²⁴¹

According to Goggin, Woodson and other scholars who published in the JNH were among the first to challenge the biased concepts presented by Ulrich B. Phillips and his students.²⁴² Woodson reviewed Phillip's American Negro Slavery in both the Journal and the Mississippi Valley Historical Review arguing that the interpretation given was only from an economical point of view and that Phillip failed

²⁴⁰Goggins, "Countering White Racist Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson and the Journal of Negro History," 361.

²⁴¹Goggins, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 362.

²⁴²Goggins, "Countering White Racist Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson and the Journal of Negro History," 363.

to demonstrate an understanding of the thoughts and feelings of African-Americans. Woodson also noted that Phillip's methods of research did not include a thorough examination of the plantation records, especially, those of the most enlightened and benevolent slaveholders of the South.²⁴³

Soon European-American scholars challenged Phillip's interpretations. Stanley Elkins noted in 1959.

With the late 1930's and early 1940's came the full tide of reaction against the attitudes to which Ulrich Phillips had given sanction. The egalitarian liberalism of the thirties had little place in it for racist bigotry, and that reaction would inexorably force its way into the debate on slavery.²⁴⁴

Basically, every facet of living as experienced by African-Americans in relation to the many trials and tribulations experienced, and the struggle to overcome stereotyping and sense of inferiority were reconstructed within the covers of the Journal of Negro History.

Negro History Week

The establishment of Negro History Week in 1926 was part of Woodson's educational plans.²⁴⁵ Dr. Roland C. McConnell pointed out:

²⁴³Ibid.

²⁴⁴Ibid.

²⁴⁵As mentioned earlier in this discourse, this is the date that Negro History Week became affiliated with the ASNLH. It was actually started in 1920 by the Omega Psi Phi in Nashville, as a result of Woodson's urging.

As important as his writings and publications are, Woodson, according to Lawrence Reddick, at the time Director of the Schomburg Library in New York, believed the mass education of old and young, educated and uneducated of all races through Negro History Week, now a month, was his greatest influence on the public mind . . . besides imparting knowledge to all races, it furnished Negroes not only inspiration but a sense of worth and belief in selfhood.²⁴⁶

According to Dr. Romero, Woodson subsequently put together Negro History Week Kits comprising pictures of outstanding African-Americans (contemporary and from the past), stories about achievers for children, and further study guides for adult groups.²⁴⁷ At one point, even Dubois participated in the celebration of Negro History Week, making trips to the South to give speeches.²⁴⁸ McConnell thinks that the overall success and popularity is due to Woodson's careful planing and execution.

The celebration was to also facilitate the organizing in every large city, as well as, in small urban communities, branches of the ASNLH. The branches were to have as their duty the following:

- (1) To save such records of the Negro as old newspapers, receipts, manumission papers, deeds, wills and the like, bearing on the past of the Negro.

²⁴⁶McConnell, Carter G. Woodson's Accomplishments, 5-6.

²⁴⁷Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 150.

²⁴⁸Ibid., 152.; There was a rivalry between Woodson and Dubois through the years.

(2) To write the life histories of the "near great" but useful Negroes of whom editors and authors take no account.

(3) To promote the actual study of the Negro in a club or class proceeding according to a definite outline and under the supervision of the director of the Association.

(4) To secure the cooperation of a number of persons who will learn to tell intelligently to children in schools and churches interesting stories of distinguished Negroes who have achieved things worth while [sic] as pioneers in business, professional men, teachers, and ministers.²⁴⁹

Home Study Department

In 1927, Woodson and the ASNLH worked very hard to establish a Home Study Department.²⁵⁰ Designed to meet the needs of various groups of citizens, it appealed to: (1) teachers desiring to conduct courses in African-American history but were handicapped due to the lack of such courses at most universities, (2) social workers needing facts of the achievements of the African-Americans in order to support their request for equity, (3) ministers needing information as demanded by their parishioners, and (4) men in business and other professions needing a mental stimulus of African or African-American culture.²⁵¹

A booklet of general information for the Home-Study consisted of the following: (1) history of the association, (2) home-study department, (3) teaching by correspondence,

²⁴⁹Ibid.

²⁵⁰Associated Publishers, Inc., Home Study Department of the Extension Division of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., Bulletin of General Information, 1.

²⁵¹Ibid., 2.

(4) "course" defined, (5) the subjects taught, (6) method of instruction, (7) standards, (8) requirements, (9) how to begin the study, (10) fees, (11) time allowance, (12) credit, (13) home-study clubs, (14) description of courses.

The courses offered were in six major disciplines. The areas included were anthropology (1 and 2), art (1), English (1 and 2), history (1 through 7), literature (1 and 2) and sociology (1, 2 and 3). The specific scope of each course and the instructor were listed (and in sequential order according to discipline) as follows: (1) General Anthropology and African Anthropology (taught by Woodson and assistant); (2) African Art and Culture (taught by Dr. Alain Leroy Locke); (3) English Composition and Advanced English Composition (taught by Professor David A. Lane, Jr.); (4) The Negro in History and Selected Topics on the Negro in History (both taught by Woodson), Negro Economic History and Selected Topics in Economic History (both taught by Dr. Charles H. Wesley), The Education of the Negro in the United States (taught by Professor Luther P. Jackson), The Negro and the Indian (taught by James Hugo Johnston), and Negro Church History (taught by Professor Miles Mark Fischer); (5) The Negro in Recent Literature (taught by Dr. Alain Leroy Locke), and African Literature (not offered until October 1928); and (6) Introductory Sociology and The Problem of the Races (both

taught by E. Franklin Frazier), and Social Psychology (taught by Charles S. Johnson).²⁵²

A few of Woodson's books were used for some of the courses. For History 1, his text The Negro in Our History was used, for The Education of the Negro in the United States The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861 was used, and for Negro Church History they used his History of the Negro Church.²⁵³ Thus, Woodson organized a thorough curriculum for improving one's knowledge of an African-American nature, for those who had received only a high school education, or less. Perhaps he learned how to construct this program based on his experience of taking correspondence courses, while pursuing degrees at the University of Chicago.

Negro History Bulletin

Woodson's concern for children and the feedback that he received from many educators, led him to take on another venture. During the Fall of 1937 he started the Negro History Bulletin.²⁵⁴ This was a publication initially designed for children reading at the fifth grade level in order to reach the kids from elementary through high school, as well as, for

²⁵²Ibid., 8-13.

²⁵³Ibid.

²⁵⁴Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 219.

the general public.²⁵⁵ And it grew out of the Negro History Week celebration.

The basic format used for the Bulletin was one that followed a calendar of "important events and dates in African-American history." Each issue carried a feature story beginning with a story on slavery. This was followed by stories on free African-Americans, contributions of European-Americans and other friends of the cause, events relating to the "struggle for freedom," emancipation and the beginnings of freedom, recent achievements, present status of African-Americans, and the connection of African-Americans with those members abroad.²⁵⁶ In addition, Woodson included sketches of African-Americans, European-Americans and other ethnic groups, and had a section on historical news. There is information relating to activities in the schools, book reviews, questions and answers relating to the articles contained in the issue of the previous month, and productions by the children themselves (usually from Washington, D.C. area.)

Each volume of the Bulletin ran concurrently with the school calendar, beginning with the month of October and running until June. The "Children's Page" (which was specifically titled as such began with Volume IV, in 1940,) and was usually found on the same numbered page of the same month from volume to volume. Adjacent to the "Children's

²⁵⁵Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 17.

²⁵⁶Ibid.

Page" was a page of drawings to color, done by Ms. Lois Mailou Jones and relating to the African-American culture. The usual "Children's Page" numbers are 13, 37, 61, 85, 109, 133, 157, 181, and 205; perhaps they were arranged in that order to make it convenient for the children to locate "their" page each month. An index is also included at the end of each volume. Volumes I-III had pages titled "Monthly Digest," which appeared to have served the same purpose; these three volumes were printed on oversized pages, whereas the succeeding volumes employed 8.5" X 11".

The cover of each issue has an appealing picture-- either a drawing or an actual photograph. It usually related to a certain area of concern that the particular issue featured that month. Each month, achievements that had been made, usually, by African-Americans were highlighted; however, throughout most volumes articles relating to European-Americans and others are presented. Interesting concerns relating to churches, schools, professionals, the business enterprises, the mechanics, the laborers, the inventors, the engineers, and persons in exceptional spheres were also given much attention.²⁵⁷ Non-American blacks in Africa, Asia, Europe Latin-America, and African-Americans in the military were also covered.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷McConnell, Carter G. Woodson's Accomplishments, 7.

²⁵⁸Goggins, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 220.

According to Romero, the Bulletin was well received by educators and students, especially in the segregated schools of the South. Little had previously been presented to children concerning significant achievements of African-Americans, however, subscriptions came in at a rapid pace. The Bulletin reached a level of about five thousand subscribers by the third year.²⁵⁹

Sister Scally pointed out the fact that Woodson wrote fifty-six articles for the Bulletin.²⁶⁰ In fact, the majority of the articles which appear without a name, were written by him.²⁶¹ Occasionally, Woodson asked authors like Mary McLeod Bethune, Albert N. D. Brooks, Harry E. Davis, Eva B. Dykes, Beatrice Fleming, Marion Jackson Pryde, and Esther Popel Shaw to write articles for the Bulletin.²⁶² And he frequently asked authors who usually wrote for the Journal of Negro History to produce a less scholarly version for the Bulletin. These authors included Jack Abramovitz, Herbert Aptheker, Ray Allen Billington, William Brewer, Earl Conrad, Mercer Cook, Harold Courlander, Noel Deer, Ruth Anna Fischer, E. Horace Fitchett, Bella Gross, James Ivy, Luther P. Jackson, M. F. Ashley Montague, Dorothy Porter, Kenneth W. Porter,

²⁵⁹Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 213.

²⁶⁰Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 18.

²⁶¹Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 224; Miles, Interview by author, 27 April 1992.

²⁶²*Ibid.*, 224; Pryde and Shaw are his cousins.

Benjamin Quarles, Lawrence Reddick, Louis Ruchames, Charles H. Wesley, and Eric Williams.²⁶³ Regarding the Bulletin, S. B. Stratton from the Du Sable High School in Chicago expressed:

This magazine supplies the inner need and hunger of the Negro to know and appreciate something of his ancestral contributions. We respect the editor's unimpeachable scholarship which compels a skeptical people and an unwilling world to recognize that the Negro has played a significant and heroic part in the pageant of human progress; we acknowledge his untold sacrifice.²⁶⁴

History Textbooks

Woodson eventually wrote appropriate textbooks on African-American history for secondary and college levels. The first book to be published and targeted primarily for colleges, was The Negro in Our History, 1922.²⁶⁵ The topics included African culture through World War I. Names of people, places, and events in African-American history were given. The Negro in Our History underwent twelve editions across fifty years, the last being in 1972. It has been criticized as a "compendium of facts" lacking interpretation. Noreen Hale suggested that perhaps this flaw was the reason it endured for so long.²⁶⁶ Hale also contended that The Negro in Our History had a profound influence on the curricula of

²⁶³Ibid.

²⁶⁴Goggins, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 225.

²⁶⁵Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 249.

²⁶⁶Noreen Hale, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Historian of the Negro American" (Masters Thesis, University of San Francisco, 1969), 184.

American colleges, and belongs to a select class of books that brought about a revolution of the mind. She said that it deserved a high place among the forces and events which won acceptance for the field of African-American history.²⁶⁷ Another book which greatly assisted educators at the college and secondary levels was The African Background Outlined in 1936. This book presented course outlines and bibliographic information. There are chapters on African culture which also became a part of the culture in the United States and Latin America.²⁶⁸ Woodson produced three textbooks for children at the elementary level. They are Negro Makers of History, 1928, African Heroes and Heroines, 1939, and African Myths Together with Proverbs, 1928.²⁶⁹ The first was patterned after the Negro In Our History, 1922, but less scholarly. African Heroes and Heroines presented a biographical background of Africans who became very prominent, and the military resistance of African nations and tribes against Arabic and European invaders. It also included a brief survey of the geography and the peoples of Africa.²⁷⁰ Emphasis was placed on short biographical sketches of African warriors, kings and queens, as well as descriptions of many African countries. It

²⁶⁷Ibid.

²⁶⁸Goggins, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 216-217.

²⁶⁹Ibid., 217.

²⁷⁰Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 29.

did not treat the history of Africa monolithically. But included the Pan African movements in the twentieth century.²⁷¹ In the preface of the latter book he wrote:

The aim here is to facilitate the teacher's task of preparing children to do their part in this new age. The teacher must hold up before them the examples of their own people, who have done things worthwhile. Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration that comes from the teachings of biography and history.²⁷²

In African Myths Together with Proverbs, Woodson included a collection of African folk tales. He did not alter the meaning of the selections but he did place the language in a simple form in order to reach the minds of the children in the lower grades of public schools.²⁷³ Dr. Woodson also explained the function of folktales in African society: they taught moral lessons through stories of creation, and myths explaining the origins of African customs.²⁷⁴ In 1935, Woodson wrote and published The Story of the Negro Retold. This text was written for students at the senior high school level. Each of these volumes also contained chapters on the African past.

One of Dr. Woodson's former students, Arnett G. Lindsay, reflected on Woodson as an educator:

²⁷¹Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History", 217.

²⁷²Ibid., 215-16.

²⁷³Ibid., 216.

²⁷⁴Ibid.

Dr. Woodson pointed out the necessity of our appreciating what he termed a "new and acceptable definition of history." He began with the Greek word "historia" meaning searching to find out and traced its evolution, its wide extension and its rapid change in connotation. He taught that mere acquisition of facts was not all that was involved in historical study. "The right interpretation of these data," he argued, "was the end and object of historical study." . . . He contended that unless we comprehended fully this "new and acceptable definition of history" which included some description of the social conditions of the periods under study--unless we learned further how to study important historical movements which afforded continuous threads with which to bind events, places, dates and persons, our study of history would be in vain. . . . "until historians include in their teachings or write into American history the true and full story of the Negro's participation in the making of America, he would devote his life to the task of integrating the contributions which Negroes have made to world history."²⁷⁵

²⁷⁵Arnett G. Lindsay, "Dr. Woodson As A Teacher," Negro History Bulletin XIII (May 1950): 183; Published about one month after Woodson died.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

He has been called, the father of Negro history, the father of the scientific study of the Negro, and the father of scientific Negro history. Some have also considered him to be like a prophet.²⁷⁶ However, considering his drive, the tremendous amount of energy he exerted, as a result of his preoccupation to document the involvement and contributions of Africans and African-Americans in world history, he has been like a soldier with a do-or-die mission. Not only did he hold to his visions with great tenacity unrelentingly, but he was compelled to journey the far horizons around the world, in order to find the truth.

In this final chapter, we are confronted with one major question: Were Dr. Woodson's total contributions to African-American history and education truly significant and do these contributions warrant more recognition than what he has already received? But first a recapitulation of Woodson's efforts, from the thoughts of other scholars are in order at this time.

²⁷⁶Long, The Challenge, Woodson: The Educator the Prophet--Views on Education, 1875-1950, 1; Winston, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Prophet of a Black Tradition," Journal of Negro History, 459, 463.

Quest for Truth

Those who may have been skeptical about Woodson's search for the truth and the reliability of material produced under his guidance, often found it rather difficult to continue to do so. This may have been due in part to his practice of disavowing radical movements and distancing himself from agitation.²⁷⁷ His efforts were appealing to some important groups, both African-American and European-American.²⁷⁸ In fact, two European-American scholars whom Woodson had appointed to the ASNLH council during the 1930s, expressed high regard for what Woodson was doing. Evarts B. Greene of Columbia and Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. of Harvard both praised Woodson's accurate scholarship, although neither had included information relating to the African-American experience in their writings.²⁷⁹ Schlesinger was quoted as saying " . . . his work ranks high in comparison with the work

²⁷⁷Woodson was rather emphatic when publicly denouncing any ties with agitators. He stated: " . . . The Negro History Bulletin is not an organ of agitators. During the thirty years of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History the staff has never permitted such an effort to connect with its program. This organization is trying to discover and publish the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The staff has not published anything which it cannot substantiate." Negro History Bulletin, April 1945.

²⁷⁸August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, Black History and the Historical Profession, 1815-1980. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 12.

²⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 46.

produced by the better white historians."²⁸⁰

Woodson's former student Charles H. Wesley, has summarized what is probably Woodson's most significant contribution to the field of history and education: Wesley saw Woodson, first of all, as a scholar, however, even more outstanding is the fact that he considered him to be, a discoverer of truth, an organizer of truth, a contributor to truth, a disseminator of truth and a fighter for truth. These five characteristics, Wesley believed, placed Woodson among the scholars of his day.²⁸¹

As a discoverer of truth, Woodson according to Wesley, said that

[He] came on the scene at a period in the development of historiography when, as Oswald Spengler says, "Race and environment were the two main rival keys that were offered by would-be scientific nineteenth century western historians for solving the problem of the cultural inequality of various extant human societies, and neither key proved, on trial, to unlock the fast-closed door." While there was no evidence to show that race was a basis for the historical advancement of peoples, the assumption was made that this was true, because of the facts at hand concerning some racial groups and the lack of facts concerning others.

Woodson did not set out deliberately to become a scholar. He seems to have been almost pressed into scholarship by these strivings for explanation in society. . . . He knew also, as Henri Pirenne, Belgian historian, has stated, "The account of perceivable historical facts is still infinitely far from being complete. Enormous gaps appear in it at first glance."²⁸²

²⁸⁰Ibid.

²⁸¹Charles H. Wesley, "Carter G. Woodson--As a Scholar," Journal of Negro History 36 (January 1951): 13.

²⁸²Ibid., 15.

So entrenched was Woodson in the discovery and dissemination of the truth (probably due in part to his religious upbringing,) he usually did not hesitate to correct material which he had edited or authored and later found to be inaccurate. Wesley remembered:

I recall that a brochure put out by the Association carried a statement that a pilot of one of the three ships of the fleet of Christopher Columbus was a Negro. From a sentimental point of view, such an incident had significance for the Negro. Woodson began to dig for the truth. Each of us worked on the problem from his own angle. He came up with the view that this was not true and that the name "il nigro," which had been attached by one writer, in the Libretto in 1504, to the name of Alonzo Pietro, pilot of the ship, Nina, of the fleet of Columbus was erroneous. This appellation did not appear in subsequent publications by Woodson. He never hesitated to abandon the false for the true, whatever the cost to him and his cause. He believed in pursuing the truth, however elusive it may have proved to be.²⁸³

Wesley cited another incidence involving Woodson's willingness to correct inaccuracies in the material produced by the ASNLH:

It is well known that Banneker had been interested in peace, and had published in his Almanac an article on "A Lasting Peace," in which he advocated a peace office, paralleling the proposed war department for the United States. Woodson directed attention to the discovery by Henry Cadbury of Harvard University of his paper on "A Lasting Peace" attributed to Banneker. Cadbury found this paper, bearing a date earlier than the publication of Banneker's article, among the papers of Dr. Benjamin Rush a contemporary of Banneker. Then, Degobert D. Runes published The Selected Writing of Benjamin Rush in 1946, in which he included this peace plan as a proposal by Rush. Woodson then concluded that the reference to Banneker's authorship grew out of a paper read before the Columbian Historical Society giving Banneker credit for the production. He also stated this author was misled by the fact that the plan was initialed "B.R.", the initials of Benjamin Rush, and that since the type was not clear, these initials were mistaken for B.B., the

²⁸³Ibid., 16.

initials for Benjamin Banneker. The conclusion was definitely in Woodson's mind that Banneker believed in universal peace but that he could not be regarded as the author of this peace plan. He thus continued his search for truth, although in these two cases contributions by Negroes to American life and thought were denied. But truth in history came first.²⁸⁴

The foregoing are excellent examples of the extent to which Woodson went to present the truth, as best he could. These examples also demonstrate his sense of fairness and the tendency to consider the facts. He appears to have been less concerned about the ethnicity of the individual and again, more concerned with the truth.

Other Laudations

Michael R. Winston described Woodson in the following manner:

For thirty-five years his comprehensive program of research, publication, and public education was what Dr. Woodson called "the Cause;" with Promethean boldness he consecrated his life to a lonely crusade in pursuit of truth, scaling formidable obstacles in his path.²⁸⁵

Splendidly capturing the thrust of Woodson's dedication Winston continued:

His commitment was contagious. His burning determination was the inspiration of a whole generation of historians, teachers, and a black community eager for a knowledge of its past, hungry for pride, and for simple dignity in the face of doubt and denial.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴Ibid., 16-17.

²⁸⁵Winston, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Prophet of a Black Tradition," 459.

²⁸⁶Ibid.

Woodson's greatness was truly unsurpassed. There appears to be no other African-American, past or present, who has compiled so many documents clearly substantiating the significance of Africans and African-Americans down through the ages. To continue with Winston:

The residuum, the irreducible base of Woodson's true greatness was his career projection of a black tradition. . . . For many persons Woodson's work has its importance in providing devastating factual ammunition against the preposterous charge, formalized for the historical profession by Arnold Toynbee in 1934, that of all the races of mankind only the black race "had made no productive contribution to civilization." Blacks were supposed to be people with "no history;" not in Africa, not in North America, not in Latin America. . . . when the values in the tradition are actualized and broadly assimilated by black boys and girls, men and women, as a natural part of their social heritage, sustained by the knowledge of the past and confidence in their collective and individual possibilities, it will be realized that the greatest prophet of the tradition was Carter G. Woodson.²⁸⁷

John Hope Franklin, a recognized eminent historian, has often given Woodson much praise as is seen in the following quote:

Carter G. Woodson was especially well-qualified to meet the urgent need for an historian of the Negro people. His formal training at Berea, The Sorbonne, the University of Chicago, and Harvard provided him with the skills he needed and the appreciation for scientific study that were to be reflected in many of his writings. His years of labor in the coal fields and of teaching in this country and abroad gave him the understanding of peoples and the need for excellent teaching materials for

²⁸⁷Ibid.

effective and meaningful educative experiences.²⁸⁸

Franklin sheds more light on the depth of Woodson's accomplishments:

Few scholars have been able to obtain success in more than one of the categories in which Dr. Woodson worked: the writing of scholarly and popular books, the editing of important source materials, and the editing of scholarly journals. It was Dr. Woodson's good fortune to have the capacity, energy, zeal, and longevity to make possible the successful exploitation of each of these areas of activity. Any one of them would have won for him an enviable and respected place among the distinguished scholars of our time. . . . One can be only certain of two things: that the contributions of Carter G. Woodson to American historiography have been significant and far-reaching and that the program for rehabilitating the place of the Negro in American history has been stimulated immeasurably by this diverse and effective efforts.²⁸⁹

Lorenzo Greene expressed his thoughts of Woodson as follows:

What Paul was to Christianity, Woodson was to Negro History . . . history to him was . . . an instrument to help black people achieve equality of citizenship in American society, to enable them to be respected and to respect themselves.²⁹⁰

It is rather awesome to think how one individual, working under immense pressures, socially, economically, and politically, could have the audacity to undertake such a monumental task of producing the volumes of material that he authored and orchestrated. Such an individual would probably

²⁸⁸John Hope Franklin, "The Place of Carter G. Woodson in American Historiography," Negro History Bulletin, May 1950, 174-175.

²⁸⁹Ibid., 176.

²⁹⁰Romero. "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 239.

need a sense of profound determination, fortification against dissuasive confrontations, and discipline to continue to work almost endlessly. These qualities were mirrored in Woodson until his last breath.

Throughout all his endeavors, Woodson appeared to envision a new social order. He had always hoped that there would be just one history comprising the significant contributions from all backgrounds in the family of humans.

This "soldier for truth" (Charles H. Wesley called him a "fighter for truth") spent so much time doing for others that he never took time to write a complete account of his life. His compulsion to oftentimes run a one-man show, as he was so often accused, distanced others from him.

Patricia Romero suggested that African-Americans learned more about themselves and their past through Woodson's works than all the other African-American historians combined.²⁹¹ She contended that children in the elementary schools in the South were able to bear the burden of their blackness with a lighter yoke. She further explained how Woodson taught them to "think black," with pride, and, thus, gave them reasons to be proud of their African heritage.²⁹²

Sister Scally points out that the children on Ninth Street used to beg Woodson for interesting stories, as he would leave his office, and the girls at the Phyllis Wheatley

²⁹¹Ibid., 241.

²⁹²Ibid., 242.

YWCA cafeteria (where he often ate) always welcomed him warmly as a friend.²⁹³

Once again indications of his immense love for children seemed to herald his deep and sincere compassion for them. He rarely appeared not to have at least a few moments to satisfy their curiosity with fascinating stories he would tell them. Ms. Willie M. Miles has affectionately expressed that Dr. Woodson often spent many hours on the steps of the ASNLH entertaining the children usually with historical events of Africans and African-Americans.²⁹⁴

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois has characterized Woodson as a man who was alone, and idiosyncratic, yet he possessed unsurpassed determination and vision which help set his course. Dubois viewed Woodson's ability to produce as being influenced by a monastic, ascetic life style. He explained:

He was forty-four [actually forty-six] in 1922 when he began this independent career. He therefore gradually buckled up his belt, gave up most of the things which a man of his age would be looking forward to and put the whole of his energy into his work . . . He never married, he never had a home, he lived in lodgings as a boarder, or ate in restaurants; he schooled himself to small and uncertain income He therefore concentrated his time, his energy, and his little money in building up his enterprise, and especially in organizing a constituency among African Negroes to support his work . . . and then as the crowning achievement, he established Negro History Week. He literally made this country . . . recognize and celebrate each year, a week in which it studied the effect which the American Negro has upon life, thought and action in

²⁹³Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 18.

²⁹⁴Miles, Interview by author, 27 April 1992.

the United States.²⁹⁵

What manner of man was this "soldier for truth"? Like the heroic, Woodson gave his life for the "cause." He did not seek to become rich. He did not attempt to thrust himself in the limelight for personal gain. He made personal sacrifices of time, money, and oftentimes rest, to furnish the world with facts relating to the plight of African-Americans, and to raise an awareness to their worthwhile achievements.

Aside from the tremendous importance of knowing the truth in order that the family of humans will be made whole and transcend the abyss of ignorance, nurturing self-esteem in all individuals garners unsurpassed benefits. Studies by Greenwald, 1980, revealed: "The need for self-esteem causes the individual to accept more responsibility for positive outcomes than for negative outcomes of their behavior."²⁹⁶ Woodson certainly tried to correct the deficiency of self-esteem, in some cases, almost totally lacking in African-Americans. Thus, the significance of Woodson's efforts has been of monumental psychological proportions and has afforded more satisfaction in the minds and hearts of untold numbers of boys and girls, and men and women. He has fulfilled a need of those who have wondered why and have sought to conceptualize

²⁹⁵Johnson, "Carter Godwin Woodson: Father of the Study of Black History," 37.

²⁹⁶Ronald E. Smith, Irwin G. Sarason, and Barbara R. Sarason, Psychology: The Frontiers of Behavior, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1986), 588.

truth.

Bonnie Gillespie contended that Woodson was a proud man and that his persona was so electrified it rubbed off, or engendered pride in those he encountered. As one who knew him he stated: "The sustaining pride and self assurance that he gave us and that he has inoculated in our group as a result of his authentic research is a priceless legacy for all. He often jocundly declared that his work was his hobby."²⁹⁷

Rather irrefutably the application of the scientific method in practically all disciplines, usually affords more significant and reliable results. Producing material from a scientific approach became one of Woodson's trademarks, and an innovator, when it came to producing much American historiography.²⁹⁸

Gillespie pointed out that prior to Woodson,

American historiography . . . was only postulations and assertions regarding the cultural, professional, educational, and ecclesiastical lives of Negroes in America . . . Things would never be the same again.

No longer would analyses about Blacks be made without substantial facts and figures. Woodson's utilization of statistics in his books was unprecedented as exemplified in such books as: The History of the Negro Church (1921), A Century of Negro Migration (1918), and Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States in 1830. Woodson's use of government data had help fill many voids and neglected areas regarding Negro life in America. In this regard Dr. Franklin said the following: " . . . Free Negro Heads of Families in 1830, published in 1925, provided the first definitive statistical information regarding this much discussed and

²⁹⁷Gillespie, Carter G. Woodson Tackling the World of Work as a Teacher and Administrator, 5.

²⁹⁸Ibid.

misunderstood group".²⁹⁹

Gillespie continued to expound on the type of literary product, with regards to style of writing and scholarship, Woodson contributed. He indicated that Woodson's writing often involved an analysis of calm and scholarly treatment of the subject at hand. He avoided emotional tactics although he hammered away to make his point; however, he stuck to the facts.³⁰⁰

About Woodson's painstaking efforts Dr. Kelly Miller wrote:

The importance of Dr. Woodson's work is better appreciated when we reflect that the literature of the race problem abounds mainly in propaganda based upon opinion and argumentation. The importance of collecting and collating exact and accurate material has not yet received the recognition which it deserves. We are so anxious to solve the race problem that we do not take time to study it. Infallible assumption and passionate dogma take the place of carefully ascertained fact and calm analysis. The largest measure of our admiration is due to the Negro who can divest himself of momentary passion and prejudice, and with self-detachment, devote his powers to searching and sifting the historical facts growing out of race relationship and present them to the world, just as they are in their untampered integrity.³⁰¹

To produce the massive collection of literary material that Woodson authored and edited must have involved stellar dedication, Herculean stamina, an appreciable level of

²⁹⁹Ibid., 7.

³⁰⁰Ibid.

³⁰¹Miller, "An Estimate of Carter G. Woodson and his Work in Connection with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc.," 3.

patience, and laboring meticulousity. There were no computers available to execute the massive compiling, filing, database retrieval and the like. There was just exhaustive hours of laborious work, day after day, night after night. At least, Woodson's display of work ethics was a demonstration of pure dedication and perseverance. This is probably true of any scientific historian, such as, Woodson. He was intent on digging out every significant role African-Americans had played in the drama of world history. Thus, making history full and complete, and true to the actual occurrences in history.³⁰²

The historian scholar Benjamin Quarles reflected on some of Woodson's admirable qualities:

Quick to smile or laugh, he had a ready sense of humor . . . while in his remarks he was direct and straightforward, making him seem a bit blunt . . . I never heard him make a cutting remark, or say anything clever at anyone else's expense. . . . He loved to converse (as a man without a wife might be expected to do) and if he did most of the talking it was because he had so much to say worth hearing.³⁰³

Quarles has summed up Woodson in the following:

. . . as a leader in pointing up the black American's role in history, Woodson needs no higher honor. . . . In the current upsurge of black studies . . . there is no figure to whom there is and will continue to be a greater indebtedness than to Woodson, his sun is now brighter than ever before.³⁰⁴

³⁰²Ibid., 4.

³⁰³Romero, "Carter G. Woodson: A Biography," 261-62.

³⁰⁴Ibid., 262.

The District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce also had some words of praise for Woodson:

The pioneering spirit of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Father of Negro History in the United States, enriches the life of American people in particular, more forcefully today than ever before.

This is the significance of the fiftieth birthday of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, whose founder he was.

With pride in our culture, our history, and the vital role which our people play in the cultural, political and economic of our country today, we salute this great institution.

We urge all citizens of Washington to support the Association's national fund drive to build a memorial in the Nation's Capital for the benefit of all people who seek knowledge of our heritage.³⁰⁵

Dwight Dumond of the University of Michigan has been laudative about the ASNLH and this "soldier for truth":

The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History has a very special mission to perform in America today. We can only marvel at the foresight and wisdom of Carter Woodson and his associates who founded the organization and Journal; and salute those who have continued their work. How little can we know of the agonizing struggle of those pioneers in the field! It is imperative that their faith be justified by our own intensification of effort. We face a long period of regeneration if democracy is to be redeemed; a complete reorganization in human relations if we are to ride out the current revolution; and a fanciful but inescapable act of retributive justice as a nation if we are to avoid everlasting damnation. . . . The monopoly of human rights must end by acknowledgement of equality as the greatest of all human attributes. It can end for us only by universal appreciation of the cultural background and enormous contributions of the American Negro to our civilization. The work of this Association has enriched our lives, and it may well be our salvation in the days

³⁰⁵The District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Inc., "The Spirit of Carter G. Woodson Still Lives," Introductory Pamphlet "The Father of Black History--Carter G. Woodson, A Living Legacy", Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc. 1989), 10.

to come. For myself, and for the country we love, my heartiest congratulations on its fiftieth anniversary.³⁰⁶

Arthur M. Schlesinger of the Department of History at Harvard, at the time, also contributed to the 1965 celebration that paid tribute to Woodson's accomplishments. He wrote:

I am happy to join in saluting the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History on the occasion of its Golden Anniversary. Thanks to the constructive genius of Carter G. Woodson, the founder of the Association, the Journal of Negro History from the beginning established itself as an equal member of the family of American historical periodicals and as the leader of its particular field. On so solid a foundation of achievement it is certain to render equally valuable service in the future.³⁰⁷

Finally, historian Jacqueline A. Goggin saw Woodson as a highly independent, principled and self-assuring individual. She pointed out that, at times, he seemed opinionated and domineering.³⁰⁸ This could possibly be due to his determination to stay on course with his mission. Having

³⁰⁶Dwight Dumond, comment, "What Some People Had to Say About Carter G. Woodson in 1965," Introductory Pamphlet "The Father of Black History--Carter G. Woodson, A Living Legacy," Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 11.

³⁰⁷Arthur M. Schlesinger, comment, "What Some People Had to Say About Carter G. Woodson in 1965," Introductory Pamphlet "The Father of Black History--Carter G. Woodson, A Living Legacy," Carter G. Woodson 1990 Kit--High School to University Level, no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1989), 11.

³⁰⁸Goggin, "Carter G. Woodson and the Movement to Promote Black History," 326.

discovered information that so many others had not seen, he may have thought that he had a more thorough view of the scheme of things. Goggin also reflects on Woodson's high regard for education rather than political agitation. He did not mix politics with education and frequently warned his colleagues against such practices. In 1945 he wrote:

The Association has had to warn historians against developing into professional race leaders. The function of the historian is to serve the truth rather than agitate. In this way much has been done to direct the work along the proper channels and to keep it on the level of publishing truth rather than participating in propaganda.³⁰⁹

Woodson contended, according to Goggin, that this was the best solution to the race problem.

Could it be that no one else was able to imagine Woodson's vision? Or if they did imagine it, could they find enough conviction, dedication, or find the cause so important enough that one would be willing to live or die to do it justice?

Answers

Why was truth or verisimilitude so important to Woodson? Did he have an insatiable yearning to be free, an undying longing to have all humans live in an environment free from unwarranted strife, to be free from the defamation of one's character unjustifiably, or to be free to reach a state

³⁰⁹Ibid.

of self-actualization? One can never know what actually went on in the mind of Woodson. One can only offer opinions of interpretations. Perhaps he thought that he was carrying out his "Father's work" (again reflecting on his heavy religious influence.) It appears that he did not have much choice in the matter. His course was set long ago so all he could do was follow his inner convictions.

There are probably many leaders, lay persons, etc. in the African-American communities who would not agree with there being a greater awareness of Woodson and his contributions today, to an appreciable level. However, looking to a brighter side some positive statements can be made.

The African-American community has, especially, reached a heightened state of awareness commensurate with Woodson's contributions. They have begun to know the real significance of what he has done to save them from historical obscurity, from becoming a negligible factor in the history of the world. Perhaps their mis-education has not been so profound that they are not able to rise out of their slumber in order to conceptualize the significance of his contributions.

There are some things, however, that are more certain. He has, in essence, given African-Americans a written history covering practically every major facet of their lives. A history that has restored, or established, a

written legacy, a history that has generated high self-esteem, and helped fill a void in their very existence. Like the great Beethoven, Woodson has produced classics, in African-American historiography.

It had been Woodson's vision that there would come a day when African-American history, or any other ethnic history, would become an integral part of American history. His vision means that historians will join together in America, and eventually around the world in order to present the facts on the commonality and worthiness of human groups, and their universal linkage.

In a final tribute to this "soldier for truth," Mary McLeod Bethune wrote:

He dug down in the cells of darkness and revealed to us the background of the Negro, while he kept us constantly aware of history influx around us, still responsive to shaping by today's dynamic action--and our duty to that action in increasing measure. . . .

I believed in Carter Woodson because he stirred the dormant pride in the souls of thousands ignorant or unmindful of our glorious heritage, and then struck the roots of his leadership deep, to produce the orderly and keen-sighted evaluation and objective interpretation of the facts unearthed through his efforts. . . .

I believed in him because he was big! He was quiet to the point of being taciturn, because he was so shy. He was a man of the soil. He grew to young manhood the hard self-taught way. But he was too big and too wise to underestimate or reject the tools of intellectual training and skill. He knew the value of both experience and training. He had both and applied both, ceaselessly and unstintingly, to his labors. . . .

I shall always believe in Carter Woodson. He helped me to maintain faith in myself. He gave me renewed confidence in the capacity of my race for development and in the capacity of my country for justice for her own people and for all peoples. With the power of cumulative fact he moved back the barriers and broadened our vision of the world and the world's vision

of us.

May God bless him and bless us, as we move forward to carry on.³¹⁰

Carter (Uncle "G") died 3 April 1950, but his legacy is still alive.³¹¹

³¹⁰Mary McLeod Bethune, "True Leadership is Timeless," Negro History Bulletin, XIII May 1950, 173.

³¹¹Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 19.

APPENDIX

Although Dr. Woodson for several years maintained a file of outstanding African-Americans to be included in his Encyclopedia Africana, he never completed it.³¹² However, the scholarly Journal of Negro History (1916-1950), and the Negro History Bulletin (1937-1950) progressed.

In addition to the works analyzed in preceding chapters, Woodson made other significant contributions in the form of books, monographs and articles. These were his research contributions to historical truth.³¹³ With the publication of The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861 (1915) a new period of research and writing in the educational history of the African-American was launched. According to Wesley, this volume is regarded as a major contribution to educational history. In his A Century of Negro Migration (1918), Woodson showed the migration of African-Americans from rural to urban areas, from the rural South to the urban North, and from East to West, during the Civil War period, and he also documented the continuous migrations as a result of the sub-marginal status of African-Americans (Wesley was probably referring to the level of African-Americans socially,

³¹²Ibid., 18.

³¹³Wesley, "Carter G. Woodson--As a Scholar," 17.

economically and politically.)³¹⁴

Woodson was a pioneer in the writing of the first, and scholarly treatises concerning other African-American cultural aspects. In 1922 he presented his findings in The History of the Negro Church and in 1930 The Negro Wage Earner with Dr. Lorenzo Greene--a major contribution to the economic history of African-Americans.³¹⁵ In the Fifty Years of Negro Citizenship as Qualified by the United States Supreme Court (1921) Woodson provided an objective analysis of the constitutional history of the United States as it affected the freedmen during this period.

In Early Negro Education in West Virginia (1921), at the suggestion of President John W. Davis, (of West Virginia College), notable facts of the early history of pioneer education and African-American involvement were obtained from a questionnaire presented. They were prepared by a committee at the college.³¹⁶

The Negro in Our History (1922) is a textbook on African-Americans beginning with a study of Africans in Africa. It underwent eight editions in Woodson's lifetime. Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830: Together with Absentee Ownership of Slaves in the United States in 1830 (1924) is a brief statistical compilation of

³¹⁴Ibid., 18.

³¹⁵Ibid.

³¹⁶Scally, Carter G. Woodson: A Bio-Bibliography, 24.

census report data for the year 1820. Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States in 1830: Together with a Brief Treatment of the Free Negro (1926) is a statistical treatment, revealing that a number of African-Americans were slave-owners, sometimes controlling large plantations.³¹⁷

In Negro Orators and their Orations (1926), practically all of the important speeches of Negroes were presented. This reference was published as a companion volume to The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1800-1860 (1926). Together with the exposition of their thoughts in the orations included, these biographical sketches of the speakers constitute a brief history of blacks in America.

Ten Years of Collecting and Publishing the Records of the Negro (1926), comprises brief historical accounts of the founding of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, its development during the first ten years, and its methods for reaching its declared goals. In this work Woodson presents a description of works produced through research during that time, a list of the Association's strongest financial supporters, and a brief financial statement.

In The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters

³¹⁷The year 1830 was chosen because it was the year that the then free blacks had reached their highest mark as a distinct class. Black heads of families owning slaves often enjoyed the same social standing as whites, sharing their economic interests.

Written During the Crisis, 1800-1860 (1926), Woodson takes us into the mind of the African- American during the period of slavery. In the first section are letters to the American Colonization Society about emigration to Liberia. Those of the second section concern the anti-slavery movement, and the final section includes miscellaneous, sometimes personal correspondence. Negro Makers of History (1928), is a simplified and condensed version of The Negro in Our History (1922). It was written in order to be used in elementary schools. At the end of each chapter are "Facts to be Kept in Mind" and "Hints and Questions."

African Myths Together with Proverbs: A Supplementary Reader Composed of Folk Tales from Various Parts of Africa (1928), is adapted to use with children in the public schools. Here he provides traditional legends from African story tellers showing the wisdom, wit, humor, and moral teachings of the African-American past.

The Negro as a Businessman (1929), joint authorship with John H. Harmon, Jr. and Arnett G. Lindsay, is a chronology of successful African-American men and women from ante-bellum times to the year 1920, in the areas of banking, insurance and retail. The Negro Wage Earner (1930) (joint authorship with Lorenzo J. Greene) looks at the various occupations in which blacks have been employed, and reviews the increases and declines in these occupations. Their work is the result of the three-year survey of social and economic

disposition of the African-American mentioned earlier.

The Rural Negro (1930), is based on the U.S. Census Reports and questionnaires sent to rural families. It is a treatment of the conditions of health, farming, tenancy, peonage, industry, trade, religion, education, and recreation. The Mis-Education of the Negro (1933), Woodson offers recommendations for the corrective methods needed for a new program in the education of the African-American. Having exposed the indoctrination tactics of educational methods that imbue the African-American with subconscious inferiority, Woodson proposes his new system that will insure that African-Americans are allowed development of their own gifts and personalities--that they are empowered to meet the world effectively. The Negro Professional Man and the Community: With Special Emphasis on the Physician and the Lawyer (1934) is a statistical report, primarily on the medical and legal professions, based on a survey that covered most the South, and most of the large cities in and out of the South.

The Story of the Negro Retold (1935), was designed for high school textbook use, furnishing review questions and a bibliography. He provides an objective treatment of the history, achievements, handicaps and frailties of African-Americans, presenting their contributions to the economic development of the country. The African Background Outlined (1936), is a compilation of African culture and history, and includes a referenced topical outline for the study of

African-American life and history.

African Heroes and Heroines (1939), was prepared for elementary school use. It is a biographical account of various Africans who rose to prominence. It portrays the militant resistance of the African nations to Arabic and European invaders. Woodson includes a brief survey of the geography and peoples of Africa.

The Works of Francis J. Grimke, (Vol. 1: Addresses Mainly Personal and Racial. Vol. 2: Special Sermons. Vol. 3: Stray Thoughts and Meditations. Vol. 4: Letters.) cover a period of social history of African-Americans from 1875-1935. In the first three volumes partial biographical sketches of Dr. Grimke (a dynamic minister) are included in the introductions. In Volume 1, biographical information of distinguished persons, comprising historical references of their achievements, are included, along with obituaries. Volume 2 comprises, sermons of Dr. Grimke, which reveals his vast understanding of life situations. Grimke began a diary in 1914 upon the death of his wife, and his impressions contained makes up Volume 3. And Grimke's correspondence with popular African-American contemporaries, are included in Volume 4.

In order to accurately document many historical aspects of African-Americans, Woodson thought that it was necessary to acquire primary sources and make them

conveniently accessible to scholars.³¹⁸ Between 1916 and 1940, Woodson collected numerous documents and manuscripts, resulting in about five thousand items.

The collection includes such items as, legal documents, speeches, letters, certificates, deeds, diaries, petitions, broadsides, bills of sale, and newspaper clippings.³¹⁹ The subjects comprise areas, such as, appointments of African-Americans to federal office, race relations, slavery and racial discrimination, employment opportunities, local and national politics, religion, and economics and business affairs. All of these items are deposited at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C..

This collection became known as the "Carter G. Woodson Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents." The series includes Whitfield McKinlay Papers, The Benjamin Tucker Tanner Papers, the John T. Clark Papers, the Carter G. Woodson Papers, additional manuscripts, and legal documents.³²⁰ In addition, Woodson included notes for each

³¹⁸Goggin, Carter G. Woodson and the Collection of Source Materials for Afro-American History, 3.

³¹⁹Ibid., 9.

³²⁰Ibid., 9; The Carter G. Woodson Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents was assembled by Dr. Woodson as an outgrowth of his interest in Negro history and during his tenure as editor of the Journal of Negro History, which he founded in 1916; Whitefield McKinlay, Washington, D.C., was a realtor and a collector of the Port of Washington; Benjamin Tucker Tanner was a Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church; John T. Clark was an officer of the Pittsburgh Urban League; the collection is dated 1803-1936, but the bulk of the material falls in the period 1830-1927; Among persons

document giving as much information, as possible, on the donor and author of the document. Names, occupations or status, and summaries of the contents were placed in an accession list which accompanied the collection.³²¹

Concerning this collection Woodson has noted:

These materials are valuable for various kinds of studies whether historical, economic, social, psychological, or anthropological. In them are found just the things the investigator needs to understand a large neglected element of this country.³²²

represented in the collection by letters or other papers are John E. Bruce, George Washington Carver, William D. Crum, Fredrick Douglass, Christian A. Fleetwood, T. Thomas Fortune, Richard Theodore Greener, Henry Cabot Lodge, John R. Lynch, Medill McCormick. Hiram Revels, Theodore Roosevelt, Julius Rosenwald, Emmett J. Scott, Robert Smalls, Frederick Starr, Melville E. Stone, Booker T. Washington, and Col. Charles Young.

³²¹Ibid.

³²²Ibid.

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VITA

I, Alvin L. Williams, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, 8 January 1948.

For my undergraduate studies I attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and received a Bachelor of Science degree in the field of Bacteriology Liberal Arts, in 1970. I also had a minor in Instrumental Music.

My graduate studies began at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. In 1972 I received a Master of Arts in Teaching degree, August 1972, concentrating in the area of Biology Education. I continued my graduate studies at Loyola University of Chicago where I received a Ph.D., January 1994. The field of study was Historical Foundations of Education under the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department.

Presently, I am a Biology instructor at Whitney Young Magnet High School in Chicago and have taught in the Chicago Public Schools since 1970; I also taught Music from 1972 to 1973. During the Summer of 1971 I taught Biology to incoming freshmen at Northwestern University in a science and engineering program.

I am currently a member in the following professional organizations: Midwest History of Education, Phi

Delta Kappa, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Society for Microbiology, American Public Health Association, and the Illinois Public Health Association.

In addition, I was awarded an Assistantship and Fellowship at Loyola in 1989, however, I did not retain it due to lack of sabbatical leave.

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

The Dissertation submitted by ALVIN L. WILLIAMS has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the Dissertation Committee and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the Dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The Dissertation is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

8 July 1993
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